

CCDS MOBILIZER

Vol 4, No. 2

A publication of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism

Fall 2008

CCDS Calls for Jobs Program

The following program was developed by the NCC following discussion at the May 2008 bi-annual meeting.

The modern world economy is based on jobs and income. Human beings spend the better part of their lives struggling to earn a wage to produce and reproduce life. When jobs and income are threatened, life is threatened.

We are experiencing a jobs crisis in the United States. Official unemployment rates exceed five percent and growth sectors of the economy such as construction are stagnating. Recently, both manufacturing and service employment levels have declined at the same time. For most workers, real wages which had short growth bubbles in the late 1990s have been declin-

ing since the 1970s. With global, national, and personal debt at all time highs, traditional economic stimulus policies are not likely to help working people recover from the burgeoning recession. The crisis is driven by government policies that have rewarded corporate piracy and greed and exacerbated the normal boom and bust cycle of "free market" capitalism.

Only a real jobs program can stem the tide of the job crisis at home.

The Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CCDS) proposes a job creation plan to generate 5 million new jobs a year for the next ten years. This would double the number of jobs required by normal population growth

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NCC discusses revising CCDS founding documents and 2008 Elections

by Karl Kramer

The National Coordinating Committee met at the end of May in Chicago to discuss CCDS's role in the 2008 elections, a jobs program, a healthcare agenda, the environmental crisis and to analyze the relevance of its 1992 founding goals and principles for today's world.

The document "For a Democratic and Socialist Future: Goals and Principles of the Committees of Correspondence" was the focus of a lively 3 hour intergenerational discussion between NCC founding leaders and others who were elected years after the document was adopted.

While amended at subsequent conventions, the goals and principles came out of a conference and convention held shortly after the collapse of the socialist bloc.

"It suffers from a position of being defensive because of the crisis of socialism and capitalist triumphalism," NCC member Carl Bloice said. The original document, he said, is weak on Marxism, setting forth the importance of class consciousness, and on the growing inequality in this country and the world.

Missing also from the document is an analysis of the environmental crisis that is a threat to the planet and life,

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New York City's AFL-CIO held an angry protest on Wall Street Sept. 25th in response to the announced \$700 billion plan to bail out corporations at the expense of working people in the aftermath of the banking and housing crisis. Over a thousand trade unionists shouted "No Bush Bail Out" and called for the election of Barack Obama, passage of the Employee Free Choice Act, a halt to home foreclosures, and money for health care and education.

At top, UFT president Randi Weingarten was among several union leaders who addressed the noon time rally. Despite a crowded press corp at the protest, the story went largely unreported.

Protests took place around the country by labor, peace and justice organizations with more announced for the following week.

Photos by Pat Fry



2009 CCDS National Convention and Symposium

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CCDS Membership by Local Area

Report as of 9/17/08:

	Current	Arrears
Alabama	1	0
Alaska	2	0
Arkansas	1	0
California South	34	10
California North	91	31
Colorado	3	3
Connecticut	4	2
D.C./VA/MD	8	1
Delaware	2	0
Florida	3	2
Georgia	3	2
Hawaii	2	0
Iowa	2	1
Idaho	0	0
Illinois	14	8
Indiana	9	3
Kentucky	6	4
Louisiana	0	1
Maine	1	1
Massachusetts	21	6
Michigan	3	1
Minnesota	5	2
Mississippi	1	0
Missouri/Kansas	2	0
Montana	1	1
Nebraska	2	0
Nevada	1	0
New Hampshire	1	0
New Jersey	4	4
New Mexico	1	0
New York City	82	19
New York Upstate	0	1
North Carolina	2	2
North Dakota	2	2
Ohio	6	1
Oregon	9	5
Pennsylvania Eastern	2	3
Pennsylvania Western	5	2
Rhode Island	0	1
South Carolina	8	6
Tennessee	0	2
Texas	3	1
Utah	1	0
Vermont	1	0
Virginia	0	1
Washington	5	2
Wisconsin	5	0
West Virginia	0	1
TOTALS:	359	130

Have you Renewed Your Annual Dues?

CCDS is a national membership organization and, without your annual dues, we cannot sustain offices and staff and the day to day work of political organization.

Recently, members received a mailing with a letter from CCDS national co-chairs, a brochure on the urgent need for a single payer health care system and a jobs program leaflet - issues that CCDS members are helping to bring to the national election debate and into the new Congress beginning in January 2009. We hope these efforts will inspire you to renew your membership and to urge new people to join.

Annual dues are \$36 (\$18 for low income, unemployed, seniors, youth). Household membership is \$48. Add \$5 additional for a subscription to *Dialogue & Initiative*.

Send check payable to the CCDS to: 545 Eighth Ave, Rm 1420, NYC 10018 or go on-line: www.cc-ds.org

Dialogue & Initiative Subscribe to *Dialogue & Initiative*, a publication of the Committees of Correspondence Education Fund, Inc.

The Winter 2009 issue is currently in the works and will include presentations by CCDS national leaders who spoke at the "How Class Works" conference at Stony Brook University of New York in June. Sub is \$10/year; \$5 with membership.

The *CCDS Mobilizer* is a publication of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CCDS). The CCDS National Office is located at:

545 Eighth Ave., Room 1420
NY, NY 10018

Ph: 212.868.3733 Fx: 212.868.3334

Email: national@cc-ds.org

Web: www.cc-ds.org

Member contributions to this publication are welcomed. Pat Fry, Editor

CCDS Local Areas

Charleston, SC
James Campbell
jamesecj@aol.com

Southern California
Marian Gordon
Margordon@sbcglobal.net

Northern California
Karl Kramer
staff@ncalcofc.org

Washington DC/MD/VA
Web Site: www.redandgreen.org
Walter Teague
wteague@verizon.net

Lafayette, IN
Harry Targ
targ@purdue.edu

Chicago, IL
illinois@cc-ds.org

Boston, MA
Mike Wolfson
mwolfson@hsph.harvard.edu

Louisville, KY
Fred Hicks
fredhicks@fastmail.fm

New York City (Metro)
national@cc-ds.org

Mid-Valley Oregon
June/Ed Hemmingson
hemmi@juno.com

Regional Coordinators

Midwest
Harry Targ
targ@purdue.edu

South
Renee Carter
rencar@cox.net

East
Duncan McFarland
Duncan.McFarland@sappi.com

West
Karl Kramer
staff@ncalcofc.org

CCDS Panel at Conference on Working Class

By Harry Targ

The CCDS panel at the June "How Class Works" conference at Stony Brook Univ. was well attended. Entitled "Class, Race, Gender and the Crisis of Political Economy," the panel featured presentations by CCDS members Harry Targ, Mark Soloman, Carl Bloice, Meta Van Sickle and Ira Grupper.

"The political and economic crises of the 21st century parallel those of the 1930s," said Solomon. He suggested that progressives might learn from the movements of the 1930s to help build a new social movement around the presidential candidacy of Barack Obama. Central to the 1930s progressive experience, he claimed, was a conscious effort to address racism and gender oppression.

Targ identified the interconnected economic and political processes that have undergirded the U.S. since the end of WW II: creating a 'permanent war' economy, financialization, deindustrialization, and globalization.

Van Sickle, Professor of Education at the College and University of Charleston, described the 'new southern strategy' designed to re-inject racism into the political life of the South. She discussed the historical legacy of racism from the coded 'states rights' discourse of John C. Calhoun in the 1830s to Strom Thurmond in the post WW II era.

Bloice, who writes for the Black Commentator, concluded that leaders of unions, churches and working class communities must come forward and say clearly that the divisive electoral campaign is repulsive, immoral and defeating.

Ira Grupper reflected on the radical transformation of the forces and relations of production in Louisville, KY, his home town.

Major excerpts from the presentations will be printed in the forthcoming issue of *Dialogue & Initiative*.



Mark Solomon, CCDS co-chair (center), spoke in Berlin on May 8th on "The Obama Candidacy and its Significance for Europe" at the "Helle Panke," the forum of the Left Party of Berlin. On the left is interpreter Helmut Ettinger of the Left Party International Department and on the right is meeting chair Dr. Albert Scharenberg from the JFK Institute of the Free University of Berlin.

NY CCDS Forum on 2008 Elections

By Pat Fry

CCDS national leader Carl Bloice spoke at a forum sponsored by the Metro New York CCDS in June at the Musicians union Local 802 in New York City.

Opening his talk with a provocative question, Carl Bloice said, "Can anyone elected to office change the course of US foreign policy away from its disastrous course?" Acknowledging points of view on this issue, Bloice said "that for those who want to move from unilateralism and reaction to a foreign policy based on social and economic equality, we have to believe that we can make change."

The Republican Party will rely on its version of the Southern Strategy – using racism and anti-immigrant campaigns to win the elections. Young people are rejecting the divisive politics. The issues of the economy, the housing crisis, home foreclosures, raids on immigrant workers at work-sites and homes, the rising cost of liv-

ing and the lack of health care are the issues upon which progressives must engage. Unemployment everywhere is rising and 1 out of 10 African Americans are out of work, continued Bloice. "The war and the economy are linked as \$2-3 billion a day is borrowed to fund military aggression."

Bloice called for a progressive agenda of putting people to work rebuilding the declining infrastructure of the country, particularly in the central cities. He drew attention to the left in Europe that is gaining strength because they are defending working class interests like pensions.

"CCDS adopted the slogan of building the Progressive Majority more than three years ago," noted Bloice, "and it has since been embraced by a wide array of forces. The left including CCDS must be a part of the mobilization around the elections on a progressive agenda that links the war and the economy."

CCDS 2009 National Convention Set

The 2009 CCDS National Convention will be held July 24 - 26 in San Francisco, CA at the Hotel Whitcomb on Market Street.

Convention Planning Committees are working to draft a convention program which will be finalized at the mid-Nov. NCC meeting.

Plans are also underway for an exciting day long program on Socialism in the 21st Century the day preceding the convention, July 23, fea-

turing an international panel from South Africa, Latin America, Europe and SE Asia and from the U.S.

A Convention Call and registration information will be available in January 2009. A key discussion at the 2009 convention will be adoption of a new goals and principles document.

All members are encouraged to make plans to attend. For more information, call the CCDS West Coast office (415-863-6637).

Midwest Region Meets on Elections and What Comes Next

By Harry Targ

Carolyn McCrady, long-time peace and justice activist from NW Indiana who served as a press aide to former Mayor Richard Hatcher, described peace and justice activism in the region at the Midwest CCDS semi-annual meeting at the Gary Genesis Convention Center Sept. 20.

McCrady said that the Obama campaign is the product of the mass movement for peace and justice. The left, she said, needs to participate in the mobilization of the progressive majority to support the Democratic candidate. If victorious in achieving an historic victory, progressives must demand that he withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Program for Jobs

Continued from page 1

and thus draw into the formal labor force 25 million of those now unemployed or underemployed. The ultimate goal of this program is full employment at a living wage. Jobs would be provided by a massive, federally organized and publicly-funded restructuring of our social and physical infrastructure: schools; health care facilities; mass transit; housing; child and elder care facilities; cultural and recreational facilities; parks and sports centers. In short, we call for the rebuilding of our communities along with the construction of new "green" industries.

- The jobs provided would be permanent with an inflation-indexed minimum starting pay of \$18 an hour, providing at least an annual after-tax pay of \$30,000 free of discrimination in wage scales. Workers would be guaranteed the right to form trade unions and worker associations of their choosing without management interference. Working conditions and wage increases would be determined through collective bargaining.

- This program would be organized through a mixture of publicly-run enterprises, private businesses, non-

Several participants in the intense and "high-powered" meeting agreed, and said that "critical support" meant support for Obama now with as much energy as possible and, at the same time, prepare for the day after the election to begin to mobilize to win a progressive agenda.

Ted Pearson warned that the neo-conservative faction of the ruling class expected to use the Republican vice presidential nomination of Sarah Palin to posture as populists to cut the margin of Obama's presidential victory and to confuse the voters. Pearson suggested that while it seems Obama could win the election, the situation is volatile and the Palin nomination represents the threat of fascism in

America.

The semi-annual meeting included members from Chicago, Gary and West Lafayette, In, Louisville and Lexington, Ky. The next Midwest meeting will be held March 28, 2009.



Participants at the Gary, Indiana CCDS Midwest Regional Meeting. Photo by Janet Tucker.

profit organizations, and worker cooperatives - whichever was most practical and efficient in a given industry.

- This program would include vigorous affirmative action to guarantee job opportunities to African Americans, Latinos, Asian-Pacific Islanders, American Indians and youth, particularly in the urban centers that have been devastated by job losses and unemployment.

- The rights of immigrant workers are integral to the rights of all at the workplace. This jobs program calls for "legalization" for all who work, an end to raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and a halt to firings on the basis of Social Security "no match" letters.

- This program would be financed in the following ways: transfer half of the annual U.S. trillion dollar military expenses to the jobs program; substantially increase the tax on both the income and wealth of the top 1 percent; levy a significant tax on the profits of major corporations with tax rebates going to those who participate in the job creation program; and close the tax loopholes and shelters that allow corporations and the wealthy to

avoid paying their fair share of taxes.

- Steps would be taken to reverse our unsustainable current account deficit that is accelerated by capital flight to avoid tax and wage burdens. This means entrance to the U.S. domestic market must be denied to those corporations and financial institutions based here or abroad who sabotage our job creation and maintenance program through tax havens and low wage job exploitation abroad.

- Legislation that can provide a model for more expansive programs is the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act (HR 4048), a program that would put 100,000 Gulf Coast residents and evacuees to work with job training to rebuild their homes and communities destroyed by Hurricane Katrina and government inaction. We call for immediate passage of this important legislation introduced in the House of Representatives in November 2007.

We welcome responses and discussion of this proposal and challenge candidates to adopt this program as part of their platform.

For copies, go to: www.cc-ds.org to download, or call the National Office.

Los Angeles Social Forum

By Michael Kaufman

The Los Angeles Social Forum was a success! Over five hundred people attended one or more of the over sixty scheduled workshops June 27-29th. CCDS hosted one workshop, "A vision of 21st Century Socialism and Why Capitalism Has Failed." Our workshop, with simultaneous English/Spanish translation, was well attended in spite of being in a time slot competing with 22 other workshops.

Our literature table was a gathering place for discussion and education. We distributed several hundred copies of our various literature pieces, CCDS statements, our *Mobilizer* and *D & I*, and our new Vietnam Tour brochure. Our beautiful, new Greater Los Angeles CCDS banner hung proudly over our table and in our workshop meeting room.

CCDS participated for over six months in helping to organize the Forum and we were a significant financial donor as well. We were also active during the Forum in helping to keep it running smoothly.

The American Friends Service Committee provided consistent leadership in organizing the Forum along

with over forty other social justice organizations from the Los Angeles area providing the outreach and logistics.

The Forum's slogan, "Another Los Angeles is possible. A more just Los Angeles is necessary.", attracted people not just from Los Angeles. People attended the two days and two nights of activities from far and wide. Several car loads of participants arrived from San Diego, several people traveled from the San Francisco Bay Area. At least one international participant was from Nigeria and an FLMN member traveled from El Salvador.

The Forum's web site is at <http://lasocialforum.org/> and its Mission Statement was:

"The Los Angeles Social Forum will create a space for activists, social movements, networks, and other progressive forces in southern California to share their cultural and ideological diversity, experiences and strategies, and integrate their struggles from the local to the global."

As the first Social Forum held in Los Angeles, some glitches did arise. Lessons have now been learned for mounting the next Los Angeles Social Forum, which is tentatively scheduled for late 2009.

Southern Region to Meet in March

A CCDS southern regional meeting will be held at the James Island County Park, outside picturesque Charleston, SC in March 2009 (date to be announced soon). The meeting will focus on national and local election results, the civil rights movement, the progressive majority, and the role of the socialist left.

The planning committee is actively reconnecting with past CCDS members and progressive organizations who reside in the southern region. If you would like to work with the planning committee or want to be included on the listserv, email Renée Carter, Southern Region Coordinator, at rencar@cox.net.

CCDS Western Regional Conference on Ecosocialism

A CCDS sponsored regional conference on Ecosocialism will be held in January 2009.

As part of its regional work, the Northern California Coordinating Committee has been holding teleconference calls with the Los Angeles CCDS chapter to plan the regional conference to be held in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The vision is to hold a conference similar to one held in Europe in 2001 that produced the "Ecosocialist Manifesto" and to tie in to that international ecosocialist network.

No California CCDS Meeting

by Karl Kramer

The No. California CCDS held its annual membership meeting on July 26 at the Niebyl Proctor Marxist Library in Oakland.

Carl Bloice kicked-off a lively discussion in the morning with a presentation on "the War, the Economy and the 2008 Elections." In the afternoon, members discussed strategy and tactics to build a multi-racial progressive majority in this country.

Members also discussed the new regional structure of the national CCDS and how to integrate its work with So. California and other western CCDS members. While No. California maintains its own constitution and by-laws as an affiliate of the national CCDS, members passed a resolution to transfer its San Francisco office and staff to the national organization as a West Coast office.

The annual membership meeting elected a treasurer and eight other members to the No. California Coordinating Committee. The meeting also decided to allow the coordinating committee to continue rotating the chair and recording secretary duties among its members.

National Staff Announcements

The CCDS welcomes Karl Kramer as full time national staff member effective August 15. Karl has been a part time staff person working for the No. California CCDS. The position was approved by vote of the NEC.

Karl's new responsibilities will be organizing for the west coast Ecosocialism conference in January 2009 and the CCDS national convention in San Francisco in July 2009.

CCDS also welcomes NCC member Janet Tucker in her new role as organization Coordinator working on a volunteer basis from her home in Lexington, KY. Janet has been working to increase the collective functioning of the various committees.

Membership Discussion of CCDS Goals and Principles

Continued from page 1
Bloice continued.

National co-chair Mark Solomon said the document was written during a period of “left regroupment” – realignment of socialist parties and organizations. “It was trying to create a pluralistic organization with different currents of thought,” he said. The document is weak on an analysis of class exploitation and racial oppression, Solomon concluded.

“It doesn’t examine the interpenetration of democracy and socialism,” Solomon continued. “The struggle for democracy deepens into socialism, and socialism is the affirmation of democracy on a higher level.”

A number of members spoke to the need for a Marxist analysis in a new draft of the goals and principles.

National co-chair Jim Campbell said the organization needs “the science of organizing and work that comes from classical Marxism in an age driven by science and technology.”

Speakers said there were new developments and threats that did not have the same emphasis at the time of the writing of the original document, such as the erosion of constitutional rights and the attacks on civil liberties and civil rights.

There was discussion on how a process of developing new goals and principles would relate to developing a strategic plan and organizational structure. Some felt that more effort should be put into organizing and practical work rather than discussion of a mission statement.

Bloice argued that organization should fit the politics. “The biggest problem of the international socialist movement is voluntarism, that if something is true, then it should happen, and if it doesn’t, we should make it happen,” Bloice said.

The organization needs a reinvigorated socialist vision to counter political cynicism, NCC member Harry Targ said.

Renée Carter posed the question of whether CCDS is a “think tank,” an organizing body or a hybrid. She

argued for more transparency in decision making.

Meta Van Sickle said that the founding document is “dated and undisciplined,” lacking a current framework.

Walter Teague said the document does not lay out a strategy to accomplish the mission, i.e., socialism.

The NCC voted to constitute itself as a drafting committee for a new Goals and Principles document. A rough draft will be discussed at the next NCC meeting. There would then be a discussion in chapters, regions, and through the membership list serve leading up to the next national convention when a new goals and principles document would be debated, amended, and adopted.

Other issues discussed at the NCC meeting was CCDS’s role in the 2008 election campaign. There was discussion of how Hillary Clinton injected class and race negatively into the elections. “The media rediscovered that there was a working class in the country, but it is portrayed as all white and racist,” Solomon said.

Clinton’s campaign established a template for the Republican campaign – racist and red-baiting. Barack Obama’s campaign has brought together a coalition of youth, African Americans, the working class in urban areas and high-road capitalists around themes of change, hope and new politics, said Solomon.

There was discussion on how to organize with those who are mobilized to formulate a people’s agenda that would move the debate from a focus on personalities to giving substance and depth to issues that can unite the movement for change.

It was decided that the NEC would draft a call to action on the elections speaking to how to impact the political process on issues such as racism, and initiate outreach and discussions with members working in the elections, and to work with progressives, such as Progressives for Obama (see www.cc-ds.org for a message to the CCDS membership, *A Critical Moment*.)

The committee initiated a labor committee to draft and issue as a leaflet on a job’s program that would propose massive funding to rebuild the nation’s infrastructure, focusing on inner-cities and barrios where unemployment is most severe (see pg 1).

The NCC adopted a proposal to produce “broadsides” on why we need socialism – leaflets that link issues of the day to socialism broadly defined.

The Climate Change Committee delivered a report, “Leadership in the Face of Catastrophic Climate Change,” that provided a socialist perspective on a global climate change prevention plan. Articles on this issue produced by the Washington, DC chapter of CCDS are at: www.redandgreen.org.

The Health Care Committee led a discussion on a draft of “Health Care Talking Points 2008” that analyzed the failure of the private insurance health care system and called for the creation of a “single-payer system” or socialized insurance, the expansion of publicly-funded health benefit programs and the rebuilding of the public hospital system (see pg 8).

Changing the usual rotation around the country, the NCC decided to hold the 2009 national convention in the San Francisco Bay Area because of the large turn-out to the 2002 convention. It was also decided to propose to the CoC Education Fund a one-day conference and evening event connected with the convention that would feature speakers from South Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe.

It was the first NCC meeting since national co-chair Charlene Mitchell suffered a debilitating stroke. She is presently living at her NY home after an 8 month intensive rehabilitation.

“We are reminded of the painful shadow of the looming absence of Charlene Mitchell and each time we meet, we realize the centrality of her work in bringing us together,” said co-chair Jim Campbell. “This new phase is a dialectic between continuity and change.”

The next NCC meeting will be Nov. 14 and 15 in New York City.

REMEMBERING OUR COMRADES

The following remarks by CCDS national co-chair James Campbell were delivered at the Harriet McBryde Johnson memorial in Charleston, SC., attended by representatives of organizations and activists from around the country, including the National Lawyers Guild. TIME Magazine and the New York Times acknowledged her life's work.

Harriet McBryde Johnson was among the first group of South Carolinians to join and become active with the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism. She was a Movement activist in a 'sisterhood' of leaders for enlightened human rights. Her work as a civil rights and disability rights attorney strengthened the movement's common thread of raising fundamental questions about society's 'norms' around "a reasonable person standard in the tradition of American law."

In the history of America, reasonable people have until recently:

- endorsed the widespread segregation of African Americans;
- sanctioned the notion that education should not be universal, of high quality and for all children;
- believed that a woman could not make an informed decision to vote.

Accordingly, a Movement emerged to confront and change these basic assumptions practiced as 'norms.' Many women played a key role by giving vision, leadership and strength to

this Movement for universal human rights and equality. They were, in effect, "disturbers of the peace of the norm of reasonableness." A short roll call of this 'sisterhood' of Movement leadership gives us some sense of their

Presente!

Ruth Wilson

Mary Davis

Ruben Schaffer

Don White

Ruth Emmer

Harriet McBryde Johnson

outstanding contribution to our enlightened activism:

~ Septima Clark - led the fight for equal access to education and civil rights.

~ Modjeska Simpkins - a fearless and outspoken leader of the NAACP in South Carolina from the 1930's through the 1970's.

~ Ella Baker - a driving force in the creation of the country's premier civil rights organization.

~ Bernice Robinson - led the mobilization of citizenship education on the South Carolina Sea Islands.

~ Fannie Lou Hamer - changed the nation's perspective on democracy.

~ Anne Braden - over six decades of activism, Anne's life touched almost

every modern U.S. social movement.

~ Charlene Mitchell - the first African American woman to run for President of the USA in 1968 on the Communist Party ticket. Charlene is one of the founding members of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism. Charlene and Harriet met and shared a mutual respect and admiration as comrades in struggle. Currently, while Charlene is fighting back from a severe stroke, she sends her condolences and embrace of friendship and support to Harriet's family.

~ Harriet McBryde Johnson, Esq. raised fundamental questions about society's 'norms'. She sums it up, thusly, "In spite of laws guaranteeing rights for people with disabilities, reasonable people still cannot imagine a reasonable life for people with disabilities. An embedded cultural response of pity prevails."

This is a bias that Harriet fought most of her life. She fought to change this embedded cultural bias. Hence, her annual Anti - Jerry Lewis Telethon demonstration in Charleston, SC.

We are deeply grateful to Harriet's family for the love, support and encouragement they shared. We mourn our loss as Harriet's journey of instruction ends. We rejoice in the example she represented as a fellow human being who found joy in challenging our "reasonableness." May she continue to inspire us as we accept her baton. Venceremos!

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR CCDS VIETNAM STUDY TOUR

The CCDS Socialist Education Project is sponsoring a study tour to Vietnam Dec. 29, 2008 - Jan. 13, 2009 hosted by the Vietnam Women's Union. The Vietnamese are arranging a special educational program along with visits to the outstanding tourist sites along the Hanoi-Hue-Ho Chi Minh City itinerary. The group will examine the Vietnamese approach to building a socialist mar-

ket economy with a focus on women's issues, and visit the Agent Orange Victim's Association in Hanoi. CCDS is committed to ensuring a representative tour group.

"I am very excited about this trip," said Duncan McFarland, CCDS member and tour participant. "I became a radical due to my opposition to the Vietnam War in the 1960s and so the visit has great personal meaning for

me. I also want to learn about this dynamic society by firsthand observation and hearing the Vietnamese talk about their country, rather than relying on the distortions of the US media."

Scholarship funds are available. For more information about the tour or financial aid, contact VietnamTour@cc-ds.org or call the CCDS national office at 212-868-3733.

Health Care Talking Points

The following are highlights of a brochure published through collective effort by CCDS health care workers and professionals.

The following are essential elements to be considered as part of any program for quality, universal health care:

A Public Health System That is a Model for Care

The public health system which is being steadily undermined and underfunded must instead be rebuilt to assure the provision of preventive regulation, education, and services to the population as a whole and as a last resort for medical services. The public health system must become the model of a future system of equality, quality, and public accountability. This must start with the rebuilding of the health care infrastructure in communities impacted by Hurricane Katrina.

McCain's Health Care Medieval

Presidential candidate John McCain's health "plan" places the entire burden of paying for healthcare on the individual and the family. It would accelerate the destruction of employer-paid health insurance, which covers 60 percent of the non-elderly in the US. His proposed tax credit will do little to help people afford what is unaffordable. Healthcare premiums have increased by 91% since 2000, while wages have increased only by 24% in that period. McCain's plan is sponsored by the rapacious health insurance industry - one of the "special interests" to which he pretends to have no allegiance.

Mandates Raise Costs without Improving the Quality of Care

Mandates requiring individuals and families to buy private insurance have failed in states in which they have been tried. Costs rise inexorably in these programs. The Presidential candidates must propose a real solution to cutting the cost of health care in the U.S.

Private, for Profit Insurance Has No Place in Health Care

The bill sponsored by Reps. John Conyers and Dennis Kucinich - HR 676 - can save the estimated \$350 billion a year which is presently wasted on private health insurance. Members of the organized labor movement should call upon their leaders to secure this objective.

The Only Way to Cut Costs Enough to Cover All is Through Single Payer

The prevailing rhetoric of "shared responsibility" for health care really means continuation of the status quo. We will never have enough money to provide care for everyone until the waste going to the private insurance industry is ended. While electronic medical records and wellness programs have been positive innovations in health care delivery, their use will not be a determining factor in driving health costs down, as some Democratic party candidates claim. Talk of such programs as alternatives to real reform is a gimmick to avoid the real causes of escalating costs, and promotion of non-solutions to the problem must be vigorously challenged. They must be rejected.

Health disparities are Worsening

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, 60 percent of existing racial and ethnic health disparities are not narrowing or are getting worse. A single payer financing system is necessary to bring these disparities to an end, but is insufficient to effectively eradicate disparities which are rooted in the complex history of racism and bigotry in our country. Health disparities for ethnic minorities are made worse by language barriers between health providers and patients. Therefore, all health facilities must provide full time language interpretation services in the prevailing languages of the communities they serve.

Our Health Depends on the Health of our Communities

The health of human beings is interdependent - the untreated illness of some will eventually affect us all. The US must provide access to quality care for all living within its borders, including documented and undocumented immigrants and their families.

Health Care Workers are the Guardians of Patients and Need a Free Voice

Health care workers, like all workers, must be free to form unions. Health care unions must fight for health care justice and the highest quality of patient care at all levels of the health care system. All health care providers and workers have the right and responsibility to speak out on behalf of patients and consumers. They must thus be protected by law from retaliation by their employers.

**Committees of Correspondence
for Democracy and Socialism**
545 Eighth Ave Suite 1420
New York, NY 10018



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