



the yankee radical

Institute for
Democratic
Socialism

(617) 354-5078

March 2006

Post-Oscar DSA House Party

Wal-Mart: High Cost of Low Price

WHEN: Sunday, March 26, 2–5 pm
WHERE: 20 Egmont St., Brookline, Apt. 1

Four decades after its founding in Rogers, Arkansas, Wal-Mart has become a global force changing the balance of power in the world economy. It has also provoked a fast-spreading opposition movement which is challenging the retail Goliath on such issues as health care, unfair labor practices, and the destruction of small town America.

The reasons why are examined in Robert Greenwald's much acclaimed documentary, *Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price*, which DSA members and friends are invited to watch at the Brookline home of Ellen Frank. Ellen is a leading left economist who, among other accomplish-

ments, writes the Doctor Dollar column in *Dollars and Sense* magazine. Afterwards Neighbor to Neighbor Chief Harris Gruman (schedule permitting) will lead an informal discussion of how the Wal-Mart business model fuels the low wage economy

Of course this get-together won't be all Wal-Mart. Snacks and beverages will be provided for an afternoon of socializing with old friends and, we hope, new members. If you've never been to a DSA event before, this is a painless way to begin.

Directions: Green Line, B Train. Off at BU West stop, corner of Commonwealth Ave. & Amory Street. Walk 2 Blocks up Amory to Egmont.

DSA Members Meetings

Dates: Wednesdays 7 pm,
April 19, May 17

Place: Harvest Food Co-op
(Community Room); 581 Mass. Ave.,
Central Sq., Cambridge

DSA members meetings now take place the third Wednesday of the month at the location listed above. Any unforeseen changes will be noted on the DSA answering machine (617-354-5078) in between YRs

The April meeting will discuss our work with the Mass Alliance, the Wal-Mart campaign, the upcoming Bernie Sanders Vermont Senate race, future forums, and whatever else you want to talk about. Join us!

Health Amendment Seeks Win at May 10th Con Con

By Michael Carr

The Health Care Constitutional Amendment is receiving growing support as more and more groups see it as an essential foundation for real reform. Representatives from over 80 organizations, including Boston DSA, are now participating in the Campaign. The Amendment, which has moved through two of the four stages to amend the state's Constitution, must receive 50 votes at the May 10 Constitutional Convention.

"While many of our member organizations support immediate action on some of the health care reforms that the Governor and Legislature are considering, the Constitutional Amendment is an opportunity to

move towards a real solution to the health care crisis in Massachusetts," said Rand Wilson, co-chair of Jobs with Justice's Health Care Action Committee. "Passing the Amendment will 'lock-in' progress made by this Legislature and build momentum to finish the job."

The Constitutional Amendment would require the state to guarantee every Massachusetts resident access to affordable coverage for medically necessary health and mental health care services including prescription drugs and devices—but the Amendment does not restrict the Legislature on how to provide that access. Sent to legislators as a ballot petition by 71,385 regis-

tered voters in July of '04, the Amendment received overwhelming preliminary approval with 153 votes—far surpassing the required 50. The Amendment must now receive a second "yes" vote by 50 legislators at the upcoming Constitutional Convention and then go to voters in November 2006 for final ratification. Once the laws are enacted to ensure universal coverage, proposed plans will go to voters for their approval. YR readers: urge your legislators to vote "yes" for health care on May 10!

Michael Carr is campaign manager for the Health Care Amendment Campaign
617/868-1280 www.HealthCareForMass.org

SHORT TAKES

By Mike Pattberg

DSA Discussion Group

Our monthly book discussion group continues, hosted in rotating living rooms, on the theme of democratic alternatives to corporate globalization. We're just about done with David Schweickart's *After Capitalism*—next up is *America Beyond Capitalism* by Gar Alperovitz. New members still welcome; contact Dave Knuttunen, webmaster@dsaboston.org.

Environmental Leadership Conference

The Toxics Action Center and the New England Grassroots Environmental Fund are co-sponsoring their 20th annual leadership conference on Saturday, March 18, at Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston.

Speakers: Marshall Ganz, former Organizing Director with Cesar Chavez and the United Farmworkers, and Craig Williams from the Chemical Weapons Working Group and Kentucky Environmental Foundation. Workshops include global warming, hazardous waste clean up, pesticide free lawns, recycling, sprawl, landfills, diesel and air pollution, etc. For more information call Jamie at 617-747-4362, www.toxicsaction.org.

Jobs with Justice Dinner

The 2006 Jobs with Justice annual dinner is honoring Utility Workers Local 369, N STAR workers, Project Hip Hop and the Union of Minority Neighborhoods, among others. Richard Stutman, President of the Boston Teachers Union, will be the presenter. Tuesday, March 23; 6 pm reception, 7 pm Dinner; \$35, Suffolk Downs, 111 Waldemar Ave., East Boston. (617-524-8778)

Alliance of Boston Neighbors

The Alliance of Boston Neighborhoods is changing its name to Alliance of Boston Neighbors and re-organizing as an individual membership group rather than an umbrella of civic associations. The old ABN was a forum for neighborhood activists, progressive city planners and opponents of semi-secret give aways to real estate and development interests. Their re-founding takes place 6 pm, Wednesday, March 29 at 22 Fenway, Room F11, Berklee College of Music. (Shirley.Kressel@verizon.net)

Labor and Health Care

DSA member Joanne Landy has written a new pamphlet for Physicians for a National Health Plan, "Why Labor Needs Improved and Expanded Medicare for All". PNHP is a national organization of 14,000 doctors advocating single-payer national health insurance. The pamphlet is focused on mobilizing union support for U.S. Representative John Conyer's. National Health Insurance Act (HR 676). For copies of the flyer or to invite a PNHP speaker, visit www.pnhpnyc.org

Public Health Radio

Mark Shaeffer of Albany, NY DSA writes that a former comrade from the Albanian local, Dr. Marvin Malek, has migrated to Burlington, Vt, "where he does a superb monthly radio show on public health issues." See <http://www.publichealthradio.org/>

United for a Fair Economy

In 2004 United for a Fair Economy, the local economic justice think tank, co-sponsored a national conference on inequality. Some of the conference papers have now been published as *Inequality Matters: the Growing Economic Divide in America*, which also includes suggested public policies to counteract it. Among the contributors are Betsy Leondar-Wright, William Greider, Meizhu Lui, Bob Kuttner, and Christopher Jencks. It's available at <http://www.faireconomy.org>

Americans for Peace Now

According to numerous reports, the recent Palestinian parliamentary elections were freely and fairly conducted, a democratic milestone on the road to self-determination. Many have also been dismayed by the result—a victory for the fundamentalist, anti-semitic rejectionists of Hamas, which seems to promise only more death and destruction. But few in Congress or the mainstream media have noted that the defeat of the governing Fatah Party of President Mahmoud Abbas was at least partly due to the refusal of Israeli Prime Minister Sharon to negotiate with or even acknowledge him, as Sharon continued the policies of consolidation and land confiscation in the West Bank. Palestinian voters apparently concluded that since Abbas couldn't deliver for them, they'd try the other guys. Meanwhile, in the

upcoming March 28 Israeli election, the social democratic Labor Party is campaigning under new progressive leadership, but trailing in the polls

Amidst these grim tidings, Americans for Peace Now is holding a dinner on April 27 at the Copley Place Westin Hotel in Boston to honor their incoming Chair, Franklin Fisher. Founded in 1981 to support the Israeli peace movement, APN opposes the settlements, advocates the two state solution, and is a credible, if far weaker, alternative to AIPAC in the American Jewish community. For more information on the dinner call Hiam Simon, 212-627-3223.

Job Postings

Keeping the Comrades Employed Dept: the AFL-CIO is now hiring "Strategic Researchers" in various cities, including Boston. They're looking for those with experience in union or community organizing or political campaigns, with skills in economic or financial analysis, industry research, employment law, etc. There's also an intensive one week course for future union researchers at Cornell University, June 18-24. For more information on all this contact Charles Taylor jobsearch@afclcio.org

Footnotes...

Save the date: on May 13 the Massachusetts Campaign for Single Payer Health Care (MASS-CARE) is holding its annual Ben Gill awards gala at the Dante Alighieri Center in Cambridge. For details call 617-723-7001, www.masscare.org...In Canada's recent election the social democratic **New Democratic Party** increased its number of seats from 19 to 29, and its share of the vote from 15.7% to 17.5%, becoming the 4th largest party in Parliament. (The Greens won no seats with 4.5% of the vote.) DSA is affiliated with the NDP through our membership in the Socialist International...Cheap Laughs? Well, maybe not that cheap, but for \$10 (\$7 if you pre-order) you can enjoy the comic stylings of **Damn Skippy**, the controversial improv group led by ace Neighbor to Neighbor-Mass Alliance staffer Carl Nilsson. They're playing 8 pm, April 13 at 67 Stewart Street, Boston (tribeboston.com, 617-510-4447)...Get well soon Ellen Rosen.

March 21

Rally Against Merc Polluters

By Elizabeth Saunders

On February 2nd the Massachusetts House of Representatives unanimously passed a bill that would significantly reduce mercury pollution in Massachusetts. The bill, H-4670 An Act Relative to Mercury Management, sponsored by Senator Susan Tucker (D-Andover) and Representative Douglas Petersen (D-Marblehead), would phase out the use of mercury-containing products and require manufacturers to set up collection systems to ensure that the mercury stays out of incinerators, landfills, and ultimately the environment. When mercury-containing products are inciner-

ated, mercury is released into the air. It precipitates down into lakes and streams and contaminates the fish that we eat, such as swordfish and albacore tuna. Young children and the developing fetus are particularly at risk for damage to the brain and nervous system.

The bill is now before the Senate Committee on Ways and Means—and its future is uncertain. Please contact your Senator and ask him or her to support H-4670, The Mercury Products bill, to oppose any amendments that would weaken it, and to do all they can to ensure that the Senate

votes on the bill as soon as possible. To encourage our Senators to do so, a rally will be held outside the State House on Tuesday, March 21, 10:30 am to 12:00 noon. For more information contact Elizabeth Saunders at Clean Water Action, 617-338-8131 x203 or visit www.healthytomorrow.org.

Elizabeth Saunders works with Clean Water Action. The Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition (www.mbcc.org) has also been active on this issue.

Contraceptives Concession—Wal-Mart Cries Uncle!

By Melissa Kogut

On February 14 (Valentine's Day!), the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Pharmacy declared in a unanimous (11-0) opinion that Wal-Mart Stores must stock emergency contraception (EC), also known as the "morning-after pill", in its 48 Massachusetts stores. The Board advised Wal-Mart that it must comply with regulations, which require all pharmacies to "maintain on the premises at all times . . . commonly prescribed medications in accordance with the usual needs of the community."

The Board opinion was largely in response to a lawsuit filed on February 1

by three local women in the State Superior Court against Wal-Mart Stores because of their refusal to stock EC. According to Sam Perkins, the plaintiff's attorney, Wal-Mart now says it will *gladly* comply with the Board opinion.

NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts applauds the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Pharmacy opinion. Wal-Mart should stock emergency contraception in all of its pharmacies nationwide and replace its current policy of discrimination with one that puts women's health first. Emergency contraception is safe and effective and

can reduce a woman's chance of becoming pregnant by up to 89 percent if taken within 72–120 hours of unprotected sex, contraceptive failure, or sexual assault. Women's greater access to emergency contraception can help reduce unintended pregnancies and the need for abortion, and has great potential improve women's reproductive health.

Melissa Kogut is Executive Director of NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts.

Alliance Splits Special Elections

By Carl Nilsson

Mass Alliance, the state-wide progressive electoral coalition, split in two recent special elections on February 7th. In Gardner, liberal Democrat Robert Rice defeated conservative Republican Jonathan Dennehy by 700 votes. In Foxboro, progressive Democrat Claire Naughton lost to Republican Ginny Coppola, widow of former Representative Michael Coppola, by 500 votes.

Mass Alliance members, including Boston DSA, devoted significant fundraising, membership communication, field assistance, and direct mail resources to the Naughton campaign, but it proved too difficult to elect a progressive in such a conservative district, especially with us

having to go against the sympathy factor. In total, the special elections were a net shift to the left for the legislature, because Robert Rice, a liberal Democrat, replaces Brian Knuuttila, a conservative Dem, while progressives held on to Pat Jehlen's former rep seat by electing Denise Provost and Republicans held onto the Coppola seat.

The Mass Alliance is also moving forward with hiring a political director. We have received resumes from some very promising candidates and will have a full-time staffer in place by next month. The Alliance will then be able to make an even bigger difference for leftist candidates running for state office!

Carl Nilsson is Campaigns Director of Massachusetts Neighbor to Neighbor.

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Boston DSA Annual Fund Appeal

Boston DSA thanks all those who so generously responded to our recent fundraising appeal. If this includes you please read no further. If not, consider the reprinted appeal below (slightly revised) as a gentle reminder.

January 11, 2006

What a difference a year makes!

The Washington Republican governing coalition of flat taxers and flat earthers, so triumphant in the wake of the 2004 election, has experienced some key set-backs in recent months—and it seems like there's more on the way.

Their scheme to privatize Social Security has gone nowhere. Thanks to the Abramoff scandal, pundits predict coming indictments of numerous Republican Congressmen, just in time for next Fall's election. An emerging majority of US public opinion has finally caught up with some of the bogus excuses for the Iraq invasion. And the recent Bolivian election is only the latest Latin American electoral rejection of the pro-corporate "Washington Consensus", (so named because many Congressional Democrats tacitly support the same Wall Street agenda for third world economies they sometimes oppose at home).

But bad news for Washington Republicans won't mean much unless the left can respond with ideas, programs and movements that speak to the interests and ideals of most Americans. We believe **Democratic Socialists of America** has a constructive role to play in such a progressive renewal. And, in our little corner of the universe, so does **Boston DSA**.

Which brings us to our annual fundraising appeal. As many longtime supporters know, Boston DSA is funded exclusively by local members and friends, primarily through this annual appeal.

We've long since dispensed with paid staff, but even with an all volunteer leadership we still need money for the post office box, answering machine, hall rentals, coalition dues and the *Yankee Radical*—our largest expense of all. Of course you're entitled to know what we've done with your donations of last year, as well as what we hope to do in 2006.

- Last March we sponsored a stimulating talk by David Schweickart on economic democracy; this has since resulted in a monthly DSA book discussion group on democratic alternatives to capitalist globalization (webmaster@dsa boston.org). Our other forums focused on controversies within the left: a September panel of trade union activists on the split in the AFL-CIO, and a November debate on health care reform.
- We continued our electoral work with the Massachusetts Alliance (formerly the Commonwealth Coalition), a grouping of unions, civil rights groups and other progressive forces who strive to provide effective support in a targeted number of state legislative races. Through the Alliance we strengthened our relationship with key allies and, by door-knocking, phone-banking and mailings, helped elect Linda Dorcea Forry, Chris Speranzo and Pat Jehlen to the State House. Boston DSA also supported (on our own) the successful City Council re-election races of Felix Arroyo in Boston and Denise Provost in Somerville
- Our plans for 2006 include projects voted as priorities by DSA's recent National Convention, especially focusing on the low-wage economy (i.e., Wal-Mart, healthcare). And we'll maintain our involvement with the Alliance—currently we're working on the State Rep. races of Claire Naughton in Foxboro and (again on our own) Denise Provost in Somerville.

Most of all we will keep arguing for the relevance of our politics against those who presume that the only alternative to the Gulag or theocratic totalitarianism is free market fundamentalism, backed up by US "global dominance" and pre-emptive war.

For human rights, workers rights, environmental sustainability and free elections everywhere; for the democratic control of capital—for Democracy and Socialism!

This is an ambitious agenda. Meanwhile we need your money. Please respond as generously as you can; make checks payable to Boston DSA.



Yes, I want to help Boston DSA work to keep democratic socialist values alive. Enclosed is my contribution of:

\$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other _____

Name _____
 Address: _____
 City _____ State ____ Zip ____
 Phone _____ e-mail _____

And, I'd like to be more active in DSA. Call me!

My biggest issue is: _____

return to:

Boston DSA

P. O. Box 51356

Boston, Massachusetts 02205

Wal-Mart Web Sites

There are now many groups, publications and web sites working against different aspects of the Wal-Mart business model, a few of which are noted below.

www.walmartwatch.com Founded by the Service Employees International Union, with the later addition of groups like Common Cause and the Sierra Club. Contains exhaustive listings of relevant books, articles and other web sites along with headings for Academic Curriculum, Fair Share Health Care, Elected Officials, Faith Resource Guide, etc.

www.WakeUpWalMart.com Founded by the United Food and Commercial Workers. Both this site and walmartwatch

were born after the 2004 defeat of a southern California grocery workers strike, when the UFCW organized food stores insisted they had to cut wages and benefits to compete with Wal-Mart.

Focus similar to walmartwatch, with not quite as many listings. It does have a helpful "how to" section for those who wish to organize a showing of "The High Cost of Low Price".

www.ilsr.org Recommended by Somerville State Representative Denise Provost, the Minneapolis based Institute for Local Self-Reliance "provides technical assistance and information on environmentally sound economic development policies". Their email newsletter, the *Home Town Advantage*, reports on nationwide efforts to stop chain store proliferation and support locally-owned, independent retail business. Emphasis is on the effects of Big Box chain stores on local communities, and what the locals can do about it.

www.sprawl-busters.com In 1993 Al Norman organized a winning referendum campaign against a proposed Wal-Mart in his hometown of Greenfield, MA. He went on to write a book about it, *Slam-Dunking Wal-Mart!*, and founded Sprawl-Busters to "help local community coalitions design and implement successful campaigns against megastores". Has extensive section on Home Depot.

www.dsausa.org Last but not least! The Wal-Mart page of the DSA web site contains analyses and international news items not often found on other sites, with a left labor focus including LabourStart, DSA statements and activities. Sees Wal-Mart as the vanguard of contemporary capitalisms' drive to the bottom. Recent article explores Wal-Mart's PR efforts in the black community



Provost Steamroller Rolls On....

By Dick Bauer

On January 10, the DSA-endorsed candidate Denise Provost won a landslide victory (62%) in the special election for State Representative in Somerville's 27th Middlesex District. Somerville DSAers were mobilized with a campaign mailing and follow up phone calls, and several were active members of Denise's campaign committee.

The special election was held to fill the vacancy created when Pat Jehlen was elected to the State Senate in another special election. Denise, a three-term Somerville Alderman-at-Large, was supported by Jehlen, and also by State Representative Carl Sciortino, who represents the north and west sections of Somerville along with parts of Medford. Denise now joins Jehlen and Sciortino to give Somerville one of the most progressive delegations in the state.

Denise's opponent, Elizabeth Moroney, had also claimed the progressive mantle, and indeed on issues ranging from tax policy to the extension of the MBTA Green and Orange Lines into Somerville to abortion rights to equal marriage, their positions were the same. Both had substantial support from

organized labor. Some progressive groups, like the Massachusetts Alliance, remained neutral.

But the differences between Provost and Moroney were telling. With little to separate the candidates in terms of state policy, Moroney tried to attack Denise on positions that she had taken as an Alderman. Denise has long advocated dense, transit-oriented mixed-use development at Assembly Square. Moroney tried to characterize this as an anti-development position and presented her own "vision" of Assembly Square based on big-box development, which Moroney had supported as a member of Somerville's Planning Board. (The Middlesex Superior Court later ruled that the Planning Board's approval of the "big box" plan was unlawful.) Moroney also challenged Denise over Somerville's so-called "gang ordinance." Denise had opposed the ordinance, which raised concerns about racial profiling and questionable constitutionality. (Notably, although the ordinance was enacted, the Somerville Police Department has taken no steps to implement it.) And while Denise had

supported Carl Sciortino in his successful challenge to do-little, anti-equal-marriage State Representative Vincent Ciampa, Moroney had supported Ciampa.

Moroney, a member of the Democratic State Committee and Chief of Staff to Senator Pam Resor, ran as a Beacon Hill "insider," claiming as her greatest asset her knowledge of the State House. Her support from elected officials and unions, and contributions to her campaign, came overwhelmingly from outside of Somerville. By contrast, Denise had the support of many Somerville elected officials and of unions with members in the district, and raised most of her contributions from within the city.

Having already "topped the ticket" as the highest vote-getter in Somerville's municipal elections in November, Denise's State Rep landslide victory now constitutes a ringing endorsement not just of herself, but of the progressive politics that she champions.

Dick Bauer was active in the Provost campaign and is a member of UAW Local 2320.

Fusion Voting in Massachusetts?

Boston DSA has so far taken no position on the 2006 referendum campaign to legalize cross-endorsement voting. Although we have in the past been unpersuaded by the usual arguments for 3rd parties on the left (while strongly encouraging them for the right), the proposal debated below is different enough to have divided some of our long time members.

Yes!

This past fall, the **Massachusetts Ballot Freedom Campaign** (www.massballotfreedom.com) gathered over 110,000 signatures from Massachusetts residents to repeal the commonwealth's ban against cross-endorsement (a.k.a fusion) voting. In November 2006, Bay State voters will be the first in the country to have a chance to enact this crucial democratic reform.

Lifting the ban on cross-endorsement will allow two or more political parties to nominate and campaign for the same candidate. The votes a candidate receives from each endorsing political party are tallied separately, but added together for the final count. It gives voters new options to show their support for a minor party's platform, while avoiding either wasting their vote on a candidate who can't win or inadvertently defeating a major party candidate who more nearly shares their own views (often called "spoiling").

With 26 labor, community, and public interest organizations behind us, our effort is rapidly gaining steam. In coming months we expect to run an aggressive campaign to educate Massachusetts voters about the democratic potential of cross-endorsement voting, using a combination of grassroots, field, earned media, and paid media in order to win the day for a more progressive vision of democracy this fall.

Here's what's coming up:

- On the morning of Saturday, April 29th, there will be the first statewide convening of a tentatively named Massachusetts Working Families Organization, which will work to join organized labor with progressive activists and organizations representing people of color under the banner of a new populist minor party here in the Bay State. Although such a party would be able to run its own candidates, we think it very likely that using the power of cross-endorsement a great deal of its efforts would go towards supporting the progressive Democrats whom it will no doubt endorse.
- In May and June, the Mass Ballot Freedom Campaign will be collecting another 10,971 signatures to guarantee our spot on the November ballot.
- Simultaneously, the newly formed Working Families Organization will be collecting 5,000 signatures to put a candidate on the ballot for a low-level statewide office, such as Treasurer or Auditor. When such a candidate wins 3% of the vote in November, our WFO allies will achieve ballot access and be able to use its ballot line and the power of cross-endorsement to help progressives achieve real political strength (and meaningful policy victories) here in Massachusetts.

To learn more or to get involved, contact Ben Healey at 617.436.7100 or Jim Fleischmann at 617-282-2002

The above article was combined from separate submissions by Tim Carpenter of Progressive Democrats of America and Rand Wilson of IUE-CWA 201 and DSA.

Not Now

By John Maher

According to the late Senator Paul Wellstone, progressives need three things to play an important role in American politics: "a vision to inspire working people, grassroots organizing, and winning elections."

Last Spring I was lucky enough to be part of a team sent by the New World Foundation to assess the strengths, weaknesses, and needs of power building organizations in 11 areas around the country. Our focus was on organizations that build a base in the community, recruit new activists, develop working class leaders, and construct broader coalitions around a strategic plan to influence public policy.

One area we looked at was Massachusetts. Here the Working Family Agenda Coalition of unions, community groups, and advocacy organizations comes to agreement every year around legislative priorities that would benefit working people. Then it mobilizes supporters and campaigns to get these issues passed by the state legislature. Since 1997, our most significant achievements include:

- A \$1.50 increase in the state minimum wage to \$6.75/hour, the largest increase in the minimum wage in a single vote ever;
- A \$96 million increase in funding for affordable childcare;
- A \$508 million Affordable Housing Bond Bill;
- A 10% increase in the welfare grant, the first such increase in over a decade;
- A \$1.2 billion fair tax package, including closing the capital gains loophole, to stop cuts to social programs—the most progressive tax reform in Massachusetts since the Second World War!

The electoral coalition of progressive organizations (previously called the Commonwealth Coalition, now the Massachusetts Alliance), which includes DSA, weighs each legislator's response to Working Family Agenda campaigns in deciding whom to support when election time comes. Over the last seven years, Paul Wellstone's three-part prescription of programmatic vision, community organizing, and winning elections has increased likely progressive votes in the Massachusetts House from 34 to 60, including the new Speaker Sal DiMasi. New working class voters have played a crucial role in this transformation.

Because Massachusetts is a one-party state, particularly in the urban areas where working class voters are, our tactics focus on the Democratic Primary as the main battleground where conservatives are defeated and progressives elected.

In New York they do it different. There some progressives, including DSA members, have built a Working Families Party that takes advantage of state laws that allow a candidate to accept the endorsement of more than one party, and allows a party to put its own candidate or the candidate of another party on its ballot line (fusion voting). These tactics seems to work for them, just like our

(continued on page 7)

The Split in Labor: A View from the Other Side

By Don Taylor

The commentary below was submitted in response to the September YR discussion on the future of the labor movement.

With the recent split in the AFL-CIO we stand at a truly historical moment for the U.S. labor movement; whether it is a moment of rebirth or a moment of self-inflicted injury remains to be seen. The thoughts that follow are my own. I am on the staff of an SEIU local which has never hesitated to go its own way. Just as my local, 1984, has never been a mouthpiece for any SEIU “line,” neither am I.

The U.S. labor movement as structured for the last half century has failed to adequately adapt to change. Emphasis on delivering basic services to members and being a compliant partner in the Cold War anti-communist social contract led to a loss of vision. While the achievements of unions in “delivering the goods” on wages and benefits enabled the working class to begin to join the middle class, the structures of business unionism that were developed to deliver these goods could not adapt when the economy shifted toward

nakedly aggressive monopoly capitalism. As the economy shifted from the General Motors model to the Wal-Mart model, the unions were largely left scratching their collective heads.

Meanwhile, union membership plummeted, and the percentage of the U.S. workforce in unions slid downward to levels not seen since the 1920s.

Elected in 1995 to bring about change, the Sweeney team made a powerful call for unions to spend more money on organizing. It was a call few unions took seriously enough to change direction, and Sweeney was largely powerless to bring about the changes he called for. Membership and union density continued to fall.

It just wasn’t working. So we left.

There has been a great deal of debate about comparing this historical moment to the separation of the CIO from the AFL in the 1930s. There are important similarities as well as serious differences. An important similarity can be seen in the divide over organizing in the 1930s.

Back then, the AFL was largely opposed to organizing workers by industry,

preferring to organize by craft—splitting workers among different union “turfs” by skill or trade. The CIO advocated organizing by industry, because they knew that unity across craft lines was essential to victory. For example, manufacturing workers at General Electric had to be united in a single democratic organization in order to face that industrial colossus effectively, not split into five or twelve or twenty different unions.

Similarly, much of the Change to Win criticism of the AFL-CIO has focused on a comparable organizing dichotomy. CTW has called for unifying workers within industries and areas in order to build strength against employers. On the other hand, the AFL-CIO structure prevents unity, where a number of “organize anything that moves” unions haphazardly divvy up workers regardless of industry or region (admittedly, many of the CTW unions fit this description—but at least they are now publicly saying that it is a bad idea).

(continued on page 8)

Fusion Voting in Massachusetts?—Not Now *By John Maher (continued from page 6)*

tactics work for us. It’s a big country—no surprise that progressives in different states use different tactics. Is there a problem?

There is. The problem is that the leaders of the Working Families Party in New York decided that the tactics that work there have to work here as well, and they have initiated a campaign to collect signatures and put fusion voting on the ballot. But at this point a statewide third party in Massachusetts organized to use the tactic of fusion voting would make it more difficult, not less, for us to transform state government. In a close primary like progressive Carl Sciortino’s victory over conservative Vinnie Champa in Somerville, only a few progressive votes going elsewhere could have swung the election against us. “Our members can vote in both the Democratic Primary and for the WFP candidate in the general,” is easy to say but harder to ensure. Fusion or no, political parties in Massachusetts need money, members, and candidates aplenty to get the number of votes necessary to maintain their ballot status. What it takes to maintain a statewide third

party can undercut our chances for progressive victories in the primaries.

Will fusion voting ever be relevant to Massachusetts? Saying never is as wrong headed as saying always and everywhere. Progressives need to keep open their minds as well as their options. Falling in love with a tactic like contesting the Democratic Primaries or fusion voting can be a diversion from the real business of building working class power.

Working Families Party organizers have collected enough signatures to put fusion voting on the ballot here next year. But fusion voting is an abstract, procedural issue. It will be competing for public attention with the Governor’s race and issues like affordable health care and gay marriage. In such a political environment it will be extremely difficult for fusion voting to get a hearing. Voters tend to vote no on things they don’t understand. Without a mass movement that believes that fusion voting is essential to winning the substantive reforms people know they need, fusion voting doesn’t have

a chance. Mass support for fusion voting isn’t there, and there is no basis for it now. Thus it will lose, and that compounds the problem. Once defeated an issue cannot be resubmitted to the electorate for six years. The ill-considered Working Families Party campaign for fusion voting in Massachusetts will leave us with one less option rather than one more.

One thing I learned traveling around the country was that in an atmosphere of mutual respect activists from different states can learn much from each other, despite differences in tactics and approach. Out of mutual respect the proponents of fusion voting should have gone to make their case to the Massachusetts coalition responsible for our electoral victories so far, and taken seriously their response. Consultation among the comrades can spare us many problems.

DSA member John Maher is a former Director of Massachusetts Neighbor to Neighbor.

DSA National Convention

Below are commentaries on our National Convention held in Los Angeles, Nov. 11-13, 2005.

By David O. Knuttunen

The DSA Convention

I am writing en route back from LA, where we have just wrapped up DSA's 2005 national Convention—and where I just got myself elected for my second (non-consecutive) term on DSA's National Political Committee, the governing body of Democratic Socialists of America between conventions. How I will find the time to serve is a bit of a mystery, but I have come away from this Convention feeling like there is new movement and vitality in DSA, and I needed to be part of it. Somehow, I will find a way.

This was my 7th DSA Convention, and for my money it was hands down the best of the last six. This may seem surprising, because the organization stands at less than half the size (in membership) that it had at my first Convention, back in 1993. But the retrenchment period seems to be over, as the numbers have started to come back up; DSA has shown an increase in membership for the first time in a number of years. And, perhaps, the shrinking of the organization has not been entirely negative. With the reduction in size has seemed to come a concentration of purpose and focus. The activists who remain are a fire-hardened group: dedicated to rebuilding an effective Democratic Socialist organization in the U.S., open to honest appraisals of DSA's strengths and weaknesses, and willing to make pragmatic decisions and to work together to carry them out...

Much of the new spirit in DSA was evident in the policy discussions on the DSA member e-list during the months leading up to the convention. DSA member is an email discussion list established for the exchange of ideas between members of DSA. Although the line sometimes gets blurred, DSA member is primarily intended for organizational topics, rather than broad theory or general discussions of the political environment. (There is another list, the Democratic Left list, which serves the general discussion purpose). As the Convention approached, the NPC decided to make DSA member the official discussion list for Convention delegates, as well. Early on, DSA member seemed to reflect a number of incompatible ideas about DSA, and about what we could and should be doing. There were debates about whether we could, and how much we should, try to educate about socialism; about whether we should put great efforts into organizing locals, or whether building locals was a failed strategy of the past which should be replaced with a "networking" model, about how the convention should be structured (and whether there was, in fact, even any point in attending); about whether DSA projects should (or could) be determined at the national level, or only at the local, and about how many and what sorts of projects we should be working on. Representatives of the NPC floated a "political perspectives" document, and a draft National Priorities Resolution, which drew

significant criticism, the former for being too broad and theoretical, not taking into account the realities of our organizational needs and capacities, the latter for being a "laundry list" of unattainable goals....

One effect of this prediscussion was a very well-run Convention. The organizers had listened to the criticism of past Conventions, and planned this Convention responsively. While some of the more radical suggestions on structure were not followed, the organizers very effectively planned what they referred to as a "Working Convention". Panel discussions were group discussions on issues and strategy, motivated by speakers from among our own activists, rather than the "talking head" events, where presentations by outside experts, with no real knowledge of our organization, were followed by "question and answer" periods, which we have often had in the past. The actual business of the Convention also went smoothly, thanks in large part to the DSA member discussions. On the locals vs. networks debate, we took an open approach; we will not stop trying to build and support our locals, but those who are interested in the network model will try to work on building issue- or campaign-based networks in parallel. (Personally, I think this exactly the right strategy—the two are both important, and synergistic.)

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The Split in Labor: A View from the Other Side... *By Don Taylor (continued from page 7)*

Take health care, for example. Under the current AFL-CIO structure, a single catch-all union with a tiny number of health care workers can veto or retard the development of employer-based, industrial, regional, or national strategies. A national campaign against an HMO giant? Nearly impossible, given the number of unions with "turf" in health care. Thus, the AFL-CIO structure actually weakens workers, preventing them from organizing for strength by industry. This is a complete betrayal of CIO principles.

That workers gain through industry strength is undeniable. In the San Francisco nursing home industry, workers are 52% organized and enjoy health and pension benefits along with an average wage of \$10.90 per hour. In the Los Angeles area, nursing home workers are only 8% organized, lack health and pension benefits, and make only \$8.12 per hour on average.

Similarly, construction workers in the high-union-density Philadelphia area have an average hourly wage of \$36, as compared to \$19 in low-density Atlanta.

The loudest voices condemning Change

to Win have simply labeled this an adoption of the corporate concept of "market share"—an easy way to dismiss the whole debate and avoid arguing the merits.

Think back to the great struggles in the automotive industry in the 1930s. How different would the outcome have been if the General Motors workers in Cleveland, at Detroit's Fisher Plant No. 2, and at Fisher No. 1 in Flint had been split between different unions? The outcome could not have been the same, and the history of the labor movement would be markedly different.

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DSA National Convention (continued from page 8)

The tone of the 2005 DSA National Convention, the quality of the discussion, the successful work of the convention, the valuable networking and exchange of ideas that took place there, all speak to the potential for a revival of Democratic Socialists of America. And it couldn't come at a better time.

A longer version of this piece can be found at www.dsausa.org

Convention Notes

By Mike Pattberg

Speakers; Among those who addressed the Convention was former Boston DSA Exec Board Member Peter Dreier, who gave a moving speech eulogizing DSA Founding Chair Michael Harrington. During his time here Peter was the guiding spirit behind our *Who Rules Boston?* an extensively researched work which was an invaluable aid for local activists. DSA Vice

Chair Harold Myerson, describing himself as a "third generation Menshevik", discussed the continuing relevance of certain parts of the *Communist Manifesto* to understanding today's "shareholder capitalism". Other featured speakers included Congresswoman Hilda Solis (D-CA) and Wade Rathke of ACORN.

Resolutions: The National Priorities Resolution reaffirmed DSA's political focus (since 2001) on combating global capitalism's "race to the bottom" development strategy. Opposition to the low wage economy can be mobilized by a citizen-labor alliance in support of expanded unionization, living wage legislation, Medicare for all, etc., along with public political education and targeted electoral races. As an alternative to the Walmartization of the world, DSA advocates a "model of fair trade, global labor and human rights, and equitable development strategies."

The Iraq resolution ratified the DSA National Political Committee statement

printed in the November YR, saying yes to "Troops Out Now" but no to supporting "the resistance". "All US military bases must be dismantled, all intelligence agents and civilian occupation personnel repatriated, all 'free market' economic decrees annulled, and all sweetheart contracts and appointees made revocable and removable at the democratic discretion of the Iraqi people. Only an end to the occupation can undermine support for the violent insurgency and create the political space that could allow Iraqi democratic, secularist and trade union movements—the forces DSA supports—to grow." At the same time "the dominant political tendencies in the armed resistance are profoundly reactionary. These currents have tortured and murdered trade unionists and election workers. They do not represent a national liberation movement for Iraqi self-determination, and genuine democrats cannot stand in solidarity with them".

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The Split in Labor: A View from the Other Side... By Don Taylor (continued from page 8)

Yet, for some reason, many in the labor movement accept today's atomized status quo. Some even applaud it—like the folks at *Union Democracy Review*, who seem to think workers' ability to change between unions like trading in an old car for a new one is more important than building power. I do not understand how having six unions in health care, fifteen unions in construction, nine unions in basic manufacturing, and thirteen unions in public services is in any way helping workers unite.

The current structure of the AFL-CIO allows a union with only a minor stake in any particular industry to prevent large-scale coordination of strategy. It also allows one union to undercut the goals of another, preventing the setting of industry standards. We've seen this in New Hampshire's public sector last year, where one small state workers' union agreed to a two-tier system of health care benefits. This small union's settlement was used by state negotiators and legislators to leverage the members of the union I work for—a union with a membership among state employees *twenty times larger* than the union that agreed to the two-tier system. The result for our members

was increased co-pays and some other concessions, and a mountain of public criticism for not entirely swallowing the "responsible" deal struck by the tiny union.

So I am afraid I must respectfully disagree with Ed Collins, who wrote in the September 2005 *Yankee Radical* that the "real dispute" was "about how to finance future organizing drives." The real dispute is over whether or not we can structure ourselves to organize effectively. It is over finding a new approach that truly unifies workers against employers. It is over the fact that the AFL-CIO structure fosters disunity.

Admittedly, the CTW proposals on merging unions to achieve industry strength do raise some important issues of democracy. SEIU has sometimes given the appearance of having a problem with democracy—such as placing what appear to be dissident locals into trusteeship. HERE, UFCW, and other CTW unions also have spotted histories. But the CTW opponents' howling about the "anti-democratic" nature of the proposal is a bit much, coming from many unions whose record on internal democracy is far worse. The fact is that these goals can be achieved in a democratic manner, but only if we all are going to speak honestly and practice what

we preach. I would direct this statement to both the Change to Win unions as well as those still in the AFL-CIO.

Many have said that with the current political atmosphere, this is the worst possible time to embark upon this endeavor. They say our enemies will take advantage of our movement's disarray. True, perhaps. But the neoliberal assault on working families, the poor, and people of color worldwide did not begin with the election of the Bush administration. It has been building for years, and even took place under Carter and Clinton. The year 1985 would have been a bad time to do this, as would have 1995. If we didn't do it in 2005, 2015 would be an even worse time to make the split—by then, neoliberal imperialist monopoly capitalism would be even more powerful and oppressive.

So, to those who say this is not the time, I must say, if not now, when?

Don Taylor is Education Coordinator for SEIU Local 1984 in Concord, NH, and teaches in the Political Science department at the University of New Hampshire. Previously he worked with the United Electrical Workers in Iowa and Hotel Workers Local 26 in Boston.

DSA National Convention

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At a session on the anti-war movement, outgoing National Youth Organizer Lucas Shapiro assessed DSA's experience within United for Peace and Justice as generally positive despite political conflicts with groups like the Workers' World Party-International Action Center, described by one San Francisco delegate as having "never met an anti-American dictator they didn't like." Nonetheless UfPJ, a coalition of 800 member organizations, represents an unwieldy but significant opposition to US imperial policy in Iraq and elsewhere. A DSA endorsed mobilization against the Iraq war will take place in NYC on April 29 (www.unitedforpeace.org)

NPC Convention Report

The following is an excerpt from DSA's National Political Committee report to the Convention

DSA today is operating in a political environment that has changed dramatically in the past few months. Put simply, the general public now views the Bush administration with the same loathing that the left has felt these past years. The Katrina disaster in particular has revealed the Reagan-Thatcher approach to the role of government as the latest "god that failed." The alternative social democratic approach to the role of government is now more relevant than ever. Unfortunately, the Democratic Party seems singularly unwilling to advance a social-democratic, New Deal approach to politics even though real-world events beg for it.

Some past DSA national conventions were held at times when there were serious internal divisions in the organization. At the San Diego 1999 convention, the prospect of a Nader campaign for President filled many of our members with hope and others with dread. At the 2001 Philadelphia convention there was a serious division in DSA concerning the proper response to Sept. 11 and the Taliban/al-Qaeda regime in Afghanistan. In contrast, for the past four years there do not seem to have been serious internal political divisions as we move into our current convention. At the 2003 Detroit convention, as at this convention, the prime concern was how to make DSA a larger and more effective

organization to advance goals that we all basically agree on.

DSA is a small organization. But we can make a case that there is groundwork for future growth. One reason is that the past two NPCs have operated with a thought out approach to our political activity. We think it is fair to say that for a number of years DSA had no coherent short term political strategy. National DSA did good work in producing Democratic Left and some excellent literature. At NPC meetings we would pass resolutions on various political subjects, but if you asked what we were actually doing in terms of national program or in terms of providing leadership to the locals and members, we wouldn't have an answer.

In our opinion, this is no longer the case. For the past four years DSA has attempted, with modest success, to implement a strategy that was adopted at the Philadelphia convention. The strategy is to find ways for the national organization and the Locals to do joint work on issues relating to the Low Wage Economy. An obvious reason for this choice is that these issues reflect our core values as socialists. Another reason is that, as weak as we are, these issues allow us to make good use of the strengths that we do have. Among these strengths are:

** Our members, whether in locals or at-large, constitute a modest community of activists around the country. We have several hundred activists in our locals and YDS.

** We have some standing with the academic and policy communities that think and write about these issues.

** We have ties to people in the labor movement who are organizing around these issues. In some cases these folks are alumni of YDS or DSA who are now in policy, organizing and political action positions in their unions.

** We have a web site that we can use to promote these issues...

Whatever else we do at the convention, we hope we spend some time considering how to make the Wal-Mart project a success. Wal-Mart is such a large part of the entire U.S. economy that its low-wage anti-union business model drives down the wages of the entire work-force. DSA has made an ideological contribution to the broad left thru this Wal-Mart Revolution theme. DSA members like Harold Meyerson have taken this theme into the

Washington Post, American Prospect, etc. The real solution is to organize Wal-Mart workers into the UFCW. However, Wal-Mart workers are so intimidated that it is hard to see how this will happen without major community support, along the lines of the recent Justice for Janitors campaign. Down the line, we can envision DSA as a key ally of the UFCW in bringing this about. A first step is to help publicize the role of Wal-Mart to the progressive community and associate DSA with this issue.

The Wal-Mart campaign could easily spread to college campuses, following the examples of the grape boycott and JP Stevens. The sweatshop economy is right down the street at Wal-Mart, and even exerts downward pressure on the wages of service and maintenance and secretarial workers, including adjuncts and grad student instructors, right on campus....

In addition to developing the Wal-Mart project there are other low-wage issues that need work: health care, living wage legislation, affordable housing, defending Social Security. Individual Locals are active in some of these, but for the convention the important question is how to create the national-local mix. DSA has a commitment to become a more diverse organization and to fight racism. Our low wage work has not yet resulted in a more diverse membership, but the work we do in these areas results in joint work with multi-ethnic labor and community organizations such as ACORN.

Report from Boston DSA, 2003-2005

The Convention asked Locals to write up reports on their activities for the past two years. The report below was submitted in November 2005

Member participation in Boston DSA has if anything declined since our last convention, and it was pretty low then. Several longstanding DSA traditions have fallen by the wayside—our annual winter holiday party, our summer retreat, our annual Awards Dinner, even the legendary DSOX. But the local has found ways to adapt, and continues to plug along with a certain political focus.

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We've changed our monthly Executive Board meetings into members meetings, although usually the same 5 or 6 people show up. But at least there are more opportunities for our 172 dues paying members to participate, should they so choose. 82 local DSAers contributed \$3740 in response to our 2005 annual fundraising letter, but seem disinclined to attend meetings.

So, reduced to a skeleton crew, we've decided to stick with our basic priorities: economic justice issues, electoral (especially State) politics, and occasional forums.

ISSUES: Our main allies here are Jobs with Justice, Neighbor to Neighbor, single payer health care groups and the AFL-CIO. We join in some of their projects; on occasion they'll co-sponsor one of our forums.

ELECTORAL POLITICS: We've been involved with selected city council races and phonebanking last Fall with Neighbor to Neighbor for the Kerry

campaign. Since 2004 we've been members of the Massachusetts Alliance, a coalition of unions and other progressive groups who endorse candidates in State legislative races, usually in Democratic primaries.

Our work with the Alliance gives our members outside Greater Boston something to be involved in as DSAers at election time, as well as offering a left counter-strategy to those attracted by 3rd partyism. While we're probably the least politically important group in the Alliance, DSA contributes mostly by publicizing endorsements in our newsletter, the *Yankee Radical*, mailed out to 1200 area progressives including unions, other left organizations, media outlets, etc.

FORUMS: Since our last convention Boston DSA has sponsored talks on Women and Globalization, US Economic Myths, the 2004 Presidential Election, the AFL-CIO Split, and Health Care. We were also part of the organizing committee for last Summers' Boston

Social Forum, where we organized a panel on the rise of sweatshops. Our forums generally attract no more than 30 people, the exception being our discussion of David Schweickart's book, *After Capitalism*, which attracted 75 (rough guess), and was written up in Spring 2005 *Democratic Left*. As a result of this success, Dave Knuttunen is now organizing a monthly book group on democratic alternatives to global capitalism.

Some of the issues left out of the above priorities we try to cover in the back pages of the YR. This includes Iraq. While we've sponsored one forum on the war and plan another next year, we have not been active in the local peace movement, partly because of a lack of consensus on the Local Exec Board about the movement's demand for immediate withdrawal without UN replacement, especially before the December 2005 elections

—MP

Memos On The Latin Left

By Lucas Shapiro and Daraka Latimore-Hall

The comments below are taken from DSA member, DSA's internet discussion group. Although both writers are former leaders of DSA's Youth Section, the views expressed are their own. DSA is connected to the Mexican PRD and the ruling Spanish PSOE (Socialist Party) through our membership in the Socialist International, and has in the past expressed solidarity with the Zapatista movement.

Comrades,

I'm writing from Barcelona where almost all of my activist friends are enthusiastic Zapatiasta supporters... so much so that they've even taken to counterpoising "Zapatismo or Barbarism" as the choices facing humanity (slightly tongue-n-cheek on their part).

The main focus of my informal research here hopes to investigate the degree to which the rift between social movements, left activism and institutional/party politics is inevitable and intractable. At least in Spain/EU, faith in traditional party structures has been waning for decades. The PSOE, for example, no longer represents any real base of support where they once held sway over a marvelously politicized grassroots constituency. It's sad, really.

Latin America is clearly the most exciting space for left politics in the world today. I think the idea of having the next DL chronicle these developments is definitely the way to go. Below is an articles that former YDS Organizer, Daraka Larimore-Hall, just posted on his blog. I think he's pretty right on when it comes to Mexico's Obrador and the Zapatista strategy.

—Lucas

the ralph nader of mexico ?

Chile's historic election, in which the center-left coalition led by Salvador Allende's Socialist Party retained power is another step forward in a progressive sweep throughout Latin America. While the Che Guevara set tend to focus on Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, a former military coup leader turned "socialist", and the populist but exciting Evo Morales in Bolivia, my interest is pulled toward the left governments in Brazil, Argentina and Chile. Michelle Bachelet's victory, becoming Chile's first female President, is a tremendously exciting prospect for the region. Together, the reemergence of social democracy in the Southern Cone and the "Bolivarian revolution" are a resounding rejection of the neoliberal project in our hemisphere.

However, the frustrating constraints of the global economy, as well as the strength of a fickle and skittish middle class mean that the way forward will be tricky.

Next up is Mexico, where a general election is set for July 2nd. The three way race between the oligarchical and populist PRI, the conservative-reformist PAN and the social democratic and labor-backed PRD will be closely watched. Just as Brazil's Lula has been assailed from his left flank, PRD candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has become a target of the Zapatista movement, which has launched a nation-wide tour meant to influence national debate. I'm all for this brilliant example of political theater, and the Zapatistas have long shown an ability to highlight the perspectives and needs of populations long marginalized by Mexico's corrupt political elites. However, some of Subcomandante Marcos' rhetoric leaves me worried. It is one thing to force a discussion of the broader implications of neoliberalism, and to mobilize a base that is interested in radically shifting the terrain of the global economy. However, as is the case in

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Brazil, Argentina and indeed in the United States, losing sight of the real differences between mainstream political actors is a deadly mistake.

The EZLN and its allied organizations have, for the most part, chosen not to formally participate in the election, though Marcos has taken to calling himself “Delegate Zero.” Instead, they argue that the tour and related mass events will raise the profile of indigenous concerns and force the heavy questions of Mexico’s place in the global economic order. However, when Lopez Obrador is excoriated as a traitor and it is argued that only non-electoral civil

society organizations are “truly” left, the somewhat puritanical and overly-theorized nature of Zapatista politics comes to the surface. Obrador’s election will make a serious difference to millions of working-class and poor Mexicans. It will make a difference in Mexico’s and Latin America’s relationship to the United States. It won’t bring about a global autonomist-feminist agrarian revolution, but that shouldn’t be the litmus test for a candidate in 2006.

It’s easy, of course, for me to sit in Santa Barbara, USA, and critique the Zapatista’s political strategy. I’m not an indigenous farmer in Chiapas. (To be fair, nor is Marcos.) However, many grassroots

mass organizations have not taken the same abolitionist stance toward politics as the EZLN is taking today- which is exactly why progressive candidates continue to sweep the polls throughout Latin America. If people listen to Marcos, the results could be disastrous. What’s exciting about what is happening throughout the hemisphere is that both the parliamentary center-left and a more inchoate and radical populist movement are increasingly successful at mobilizing popular support. Let’s hope the Bolivarian revolution doesn’t end at San Cristobal de las Casas.

—Daraka Latimore Hall

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the yankee radical