

# CCDS MOBILIZER

Vol 2, No. 2

A publication of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism

June 2006

## CCDS 5th National Convention and Symposium July 20 - 23 in Chicago

### *An Exciting Program of Speakers and Events*

Members and friends of the Committees of Correspondence will gather in Chicago July 20-23rd to discuss and debate the current right wing domination of the country's political structures, and how to help build a movement to reverse course in the 2006 and 2008 elections.

The convention's agenda, under discussion at meetings and committees of the National Coordinating Committee for several months, is now completed (see page 2). Some of the exciting highlights of the convention will be a panel of international guests from Venezuela, South Africa and the European Party of the Left; a workshop on Hip Hop, Youth and Culture led by Poet Laureate Amiri Baraka; and a discussion on the socialist vision of CCDS and how to advance it.

All members who attend the con-

vention will have a vote on motions that are considered at the convention. Non-members are invited to observe and will be able to attend all sessions, as well as invited guests (see page 2).

The 3-day convention will be preceded by a 1-day public Symposium on "Strategies for Building a Progressive Majority for the Coming Elections," sponsored by the Committees of Correspondence Education Fund. Symposium speakers include author and scholar Angela Y. Davis, *Nation* journalist John Nichols, AFL-CIO national organizer Sam Luebke, and many others. (See the program and speakers below.)

The registration fee for the July 20th Symposium, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, is \$20. Scholarships and low income rates are available.

The registration fee for the CCDS 3-day convention which includes admission to the Symposium is \$50.

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## Fighting Back, Moving Forward: Strategies for Building a Progressive Majority for the Coming Elections

The July 20th Symposium is the second forum sponsored by the Committees of Correspondence Education Fund on the topic of Building a Progressive Majority. The first, held Dec. 10, 2005 in New York City, drew a broad range of left and progressive people active in community, peace, justice and labor organizations. The Chicago symposium promises to build on the success of the first.

The July 20th speakers/panels are:

### **Panel 1: Where Have All the Jobs Gone and How Do We Win Them Back?**

*David Bacon*, veteran journalist who has written extensively on immigration and neo-liberal globalization; *Carl Bloice*, Portside Moderator, and writer on labor and jobs;

*Sam Luebke*, AFL-CIO Deputy Director of Organizing.

### **Panel 2: "Connecting the Dots" to Create a Unified Program for a Progressive Majority**

*Leslie Cagan*, Director of United for Peace and Justice; *Rev. Calvin Morris*, Leader of Chicago Jobs for Justice Clergy Committee; *Jonathan Peck*, organizer for Chicago's Southwest Youth Collaborative.

### **Luncheon Speaker**

*Angela Y. Davis*, scholar and author

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*Speaking at Dec 10, 2005 Symposium in NYC from left: Damu Smith, founder of Black Voices for Peace, Donna DeWitt, President of the S.C. AFL-CIO, Manning Marable, Professor and author, Angela Davis, Professor and author, Michael Honey, Professor and author.*

# Building a Progressive Majority

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## Panel 3: Strategies for Winning at the Polls in 2006 and 2008

John Nichols, Nation magazine writer who covers electoral issues;  
Mark Solomon, CCDS National Co-Chair, author and historian;  
Nelson Valdez, Vice President of 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East in New York City.

## Panel 4: Summing Up - A Roundtable

Charlene Mitchell, CCDS National Co-Chair;  
Camille Odeh, Palestinian Board Member of the Arab American Action Network in Chicago;  
James Thindwa, Director of Jobs with Justice in Chicago.

The Symposium will take place at DePaul University, Lincoln Campus, Schmitt Academic Center (entrance is through the Levan Center, 2322 N.

Kenmore Ave.) For a campus map go to: <http://depaul.edu/maps/lpc/>

Directions to the campus from O'Hare Airport: Take Blue Line to Clark and Lake. Take escalators to the elevated train and take the Brown Line to Fullerton. Walk 1 1/2 blocks west from the Fullerton L Station to Kenmore and 1/2 block south to 2322..

For directions from other locations, and to register in advance for the Symposium and/or Convention (see page 5) call, write or email: CCDS National Office, 545 Eighth Ave 14th Floor NE, New York, NY 10018, Ph 212.868.3733, Fx 212.868.3334, email: [national@cc-ds.org](mailto:national@cc-ds.org)

Information is also available on the CCDS web site: [www.cc-ds.org](http://www.cc-ds.org). Symposium tickets are \$20. Scholarships and low-income rates are available.

## Who Can Attend the CCDS Convention?

The following is from the Proposed Convention Rules of Procedure.

Every person attending the convention shall register as either "member," "observer" (non-CCDS member or CCDS member not in good standing), or "invited guest" (by letter of invitation). Only members of CCDS in "good standing" shall be entitled to register as members. ("Good standing" is defined as current in annual dues or in arrears not more than one

year.)

All registrants may attend any session of the Convention, and may participate in workshop deliberations. Only registered CCDS members shall be entitled to vote.

Workshops are open to participation by all members, observers, and guests. Voting, if any, in workshops is "consultative" to (not mandatory upon) the Convention.

## Have You Renewed Your CCDS Dues?

There are a number of good reasons to join or renew your membership in CCDS. The most immediate reason, of course, is in order to fully participate and vote at the CCDS 5th National Convention, July 21-23, 2006 in Chicago.

All members of CCDS are encouraged to attend. In order to vote at the July convention, you must be a member in good standing.

Another reason to pay your annual dues is to help keep the organization alive. Dues and sustainers are the

main source of income of the organization.

Annual dues are \$31; \$41 for households; \$16 for low income. Add another \$5 to get a subscription to *Dialogue & Initiative*, the journal of the CofC Education Fund.

The *Mobilizer* is free with membership.

Don't delay. Send a check or money order for your membership dues to:

CCDS National Office  
545 Eighth Ave 14th Floor NE  
New York, NY 10018

## JOIN THE MEMBERSHIP DISCUSSION ON THE WEB

A membership discussion and debate has been unfolding on the CCDS web site related to issues of how to build a progressive majority, the concept of a left-center coalition, the tactics and strategy of the 2006 and 2008 elections, and more.

Any member who is current in dues is invited to participate. To join the discussion, go to the CCDS web page at the following URL:

[www.cc-ds.org/members/index/php](http://www.cc-ds.org/members/index/php)

Click on the REGISTER button and fill out the form. Once you have submitted the registration form, your membership status will be verified and you will get an email within a day or two with your log-in information. Then, you will be ready to join the discussion by going back to the URL above.

The National Coordinating Committee would like to hear from you about your experiences with this new feature, so we can make it even more useful to our members. Send your comments to NCC member Steve Willett, who chairs the CCDS Technology Committee.

If you do not have access to a com-

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The *CCDS Mobilizer* is a publication of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CCDS). CCDS members are active in the struggles for peace, justice, democracy and equality with a vision of a socialist future.

Annual membership is \$31; \$41 for households; \$16 for low income. For info, write or call:

CCDS National Office  
545 Eighth Ave., 14th Floor NE  
NY, NY 10018

Ph: 212.868.3733  
Fx: 212.868.3334

Email: [national@cc-ds.org](mailto:national@cc-ds.org)  
Web: [www.cc-ds.org](http://www.cc-ds.org)

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

# Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism

5th National Convention ♦ July 21-23, 2006 ♦ Chicago

## Agenda

### Friday, July 21

- 9:00 AM** OPENING PLENARY  
Welcome and Introduction  
Adoption of Agenda  
Rules and Election Committee Report  
*James Campbell, National Co-Chair*
- 9:30 AM** THE ROLE OF CCDS FROM THE 4th NATIONAL CONVENTION: AN OVERVIEW  
*Mark Solomon, National Co-Chair*
- 10:00 AM** National Coordinator's Report  
Finances  
Membership  
Chapters, regions, and national leadership  
Publications & communications  
*Attieno Davis, National Coordinator*
- 11:00 AM** Discussion
- 12:00 PM** Lunch
- 1:30 PM** SOCIALIST VISION and CCDS  
*A plenary panel*
- 2:45 PM** BUILDING A SOCIALIST LEFT WITHIN THE BROADER PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT: THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF CLASS, RACE, AND GENDER  
*A plenary panel*
- 4:00 PM** WORKSHOPS  
Peace and a Constructive Global Policy  
Economic and Social Justice  
Constitutional, Civil and Human Rights  
Organizing youth in communities and schools - a workshop of and for young people
- 5:30 PM** Dinner Break
- 7:30 PM** *A Panel Workshop on Culture, Youth and Hip-Hop with Poet Laureate Amiri Baraka*
- 9:00 PM** Adjournment

### Saturday, July 22

- 9:00 AM** Credentials Report  
Election Procedures
- 9:30 AM** A PLAN OF ACTION for CCDS: Constructing a plan of work with a focus on political and electoral strategies and growing CCDS  
*A plenary panel*
- 10:30 AM** Small Group Discussions on Constructing a Plan of Work
- 12:00 PM** POLITICAL CONTEXT FOR BUILDING A PROGRESSIVE MAJORITY IN 2006  
*Luncheon and panel*
- 1:30 PM** INTERNATIONAL PANEL  
*Yusef Omar, Consulate General of South Africa for Chicago and the Midwest*  
*Martin E. Sánchez, Cónsul General of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Chicago*  
*Helmut Scholz, Executive Director, European Party of the Left*
- 3:30 PM** Election of National Co-Chairs and National Coordinating Committee

### Sunday, July 23

- 9:30 AM** ELECTION RESULTS
- 10:00 AM** Review of CCDS plan of work 2006-2008  
Resolutions for Adoption
- 11:45 AM** CONVENTION CLOSING
- 12:00 PM** ADJOURNMENT
- 12:15 PM** Meeting of Incoming National Coordinating Committee

## CCDS By-Law Changes

The CCDS By-Laws require that changes to the By-Laws must be distributed to the membership four months in advance of the Convention in order to be voted upon at the Convention.

Proposed By-Law changes submitted in time for Convention discussion will be voted upon through a national membership referendum by mail.

The By-Laws were initially adopted at the Chicago Founding Convention in July 1994. They were amended at the 2nd National Convention in New York City, July 1996. There were no changes to the By-Laws at the 3rd National Convention in Raleigh, NC in July 1999, or the 4th National Convention in San Francisco in July 2002.

Members can review the current By-Laws on the CCDS web page at: [www.cc-ds.org/bylaws](http://www.cc-ds.org/bylaws), or by calling the National Office at 212.868.3733.

Members who wish to submit proposals for By-Law changes should send them to the National Office by July 1, 2006.

## Nominations Open for National Leadership

Nominations are now open for National Co-Chair and National Coordinating Committee Member (NCC). Any member can nominate leadership.

The convention will elect a maximum of 5 national co-chairs and 15 members of the NCC. Another 15 members of the NCC are elected at large after the Convention by membership mail ballot referendum.

Any member in "good standing" from any area of the country is eligible to serve. "Good standing" is defined as current in dues, or in arrears not more than one year.

To be nominated, a member must be endorsed by at least 5 members in "good standing." All nominees must be CCDS members by July 1, 2006.

A form is provided to assist this process. Members may use it to nominate members they think can best represent and provide leadership to the CCDS. Nomination forms should be submitted by mail, fax, or via the CCDS web: [www.cc-ds.org](http://www.cc-ds.org)

The CCDS is committed to building a leadership body that reflects the

racial, national, gender, age and geographic composition of the people of our country.

The NCC strongly urges that members accepting nominations agree to make a commitment to attend the meetings of the NCC held in various parts of the country semi-annually.

Below are the current members of the CCDS national leadership:

National Co-Chairs: Leslie Cagan, James Campbell, Charlene Mitchell, Mark Solomon.

National Coordinating Committee: Marilyn Albert, Mael Apollon, Carl Bloice, Barbara Blong, Barry Cohen, David Cohen, Otis Cunningham, Carl Davidson, Mort Frank, Todd Freeberg, Pat Fry, Marian Gordon, Ira Grupper, June Hemmingson, Ed Hemmingson, Fred Hicks, Duncan McFarland, Anne Mitchell, Maxine Orris, Ted Pearson, Gina Pesulima-Palencar, Edith Pollach, Marty Price, Merle Ratner, Jay Schaffner, Jae Scharlin, Mike Stein, Harry Targ, Walter Teague, Meta Van Sickle, Steve Willett, and Mildred Williamson



### Nomination Form

#### National Co-Chair or National Coordinating Committee Member

*Please return this form by July 15, 2006 to CCDS, 545 Eighth Ave, 14th Floor NE, New York, NY 10018*

Nomination for:  National Co-Chair  National Coordinating Committee

Name of Nominee \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Ph \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

The following members of CCDS endorse the above nominee for the above office:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

# Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism

## 2006 Convention Registration

Date of Registration: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Apt/Floor: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Best Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Registration

Registration is \$50 for all four days: July 20 - 23, 2006 and includes the July 20th "Building a Progressive Majority" Symposium sponsored by the CoC Education Fund. The daily fee is \$20. For low income, and youth, and students: \$5 per day.

Please check below the days you are registering:

Thurs, July 20 \_\_\_\_ Fri, July 21 \_\_\_\_ Sat, July 22 \_\_\_\_ Sun, July 23 \_\_\_\_ Fee: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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### Housing

Housing at the University Center Conference Chicago - a short train ride to the Convention and Symposium - has been reserved. The per person/per night rate is \$61.74 (includes taxes and breakfast). You will be in a suite with two single beds with bath. Please indicate the name of a roommate, unless you wish to be assigned. If you wish a room without a roommate, the rate is \$123.48 per night. Indicate below the days you wish housing at the University Center:

Thurs, July 20 \_\_\_\_ Fri, July 21 \_\_\_\_ Sat, July 22 \_\_\_\_ Sun, July 23 \_\_\_\_

Name of roommate, if you do not wish an assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish a roommate assignment, indicate your gender: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of nights: \_\_\_\_\_ Total housing fee: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Check-in time is 3:00 PM. Check-out time is no later than 10:00 AM. The University Center includes linen service, sheets, towels, internet access, alarm clock and access to recreation center, fitness center, outdoor terrace and laundry facilities.*

*If you need housing on Wednesday, July 19th, please indicate here: \_\_\_\_ Since campus housing is not available on July 19, housing will be arranged at homes in Chicago. The national office will contact you about these arrangements.*

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**Fees:** Housing \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Registration \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Please clip this registration form and send with a check or money order, payable to CCDS, to:*

CCDS  
545 Eighth Ave, 14th Floor NE  
New York, NY 10018  
Ph (212) 868-3733 Fx (212) 868-3334  
Email: national@cc-ds.org Web: www.cc-ds.org

# Building a Progressive Majority - Continuing the Discussion

By Mark Solomon

As the fifth national convention of CCDS approaches, the objective of building a progressive majority is properly the centerpiece of our discussion, and vitally, the centerpiece of our political work.

Adopting a strategy to defeat the political right in the coming elections, and beyond, is admittedly not a simple matter. Strategic considerations are complex. With that in mind, the more discussion, debate and exploration (in CCDS's valued tradition of mutual respect) of the concept tied inseparably to our day-to-day political work, the greater the chances of achieving clarity and greater effectiveness.

Since publication of two articles posted on Portside and the CCDS web page relating to building a progressive majority, a number of pointed and valuable questions have been posed. Following are responses to those questions with the hope that the responses will stimulate further discussion and action.

1. "A progressive majority is ... an organized, unified, coherent force able to impact the political process ..." and also "a coalition of center and left." (from "A Progressive Majority - What It Is and How to Build It," May 23, 2006, CCDS Web Page Discussion). A question has been raised in response - which is it?

It's both a "force" and a "coalition" -- a political and cultural "force" based upon consensus around crucial issues: a global policy built on peace and international cooperation, universal health care, economic justice (embracing a decent minimum wage and a living wage), racial and gender equality, environmental survival, quality education, defense of constitutional rights with broadened - and deepened - democracy.

The "force" of that progressive majority would be manifested in the electoral arena by winning a Congress in 2006 that shifts from the far right to moderately center-left.

The organizational expression of a

progressive majority, as a matter of acute necessity, has to be a coalition of left and broader liberal forces (left and center). That is, a broadly defined left that generally shares a critique of capitalism and imperialism, that locates the entire range of social problems in an oppressive social system and in rampant neo-liberalism on a world scale. (Not all left forces, of course, would be interested in mass center-left coalitions. The effort to build a progressive majority should clarify who wishes to participate, and who does not.) The liberal center supports the dominant system, seeking to contain its socially polarizing elements through the use of governmental power to moderately redistribute wealth (see Carl Davidson's fine discussion of the center on the CCDS web page). Cooperation between left and center is enhanced by the particularly destructive policies of the Bush-led right. At the upper levels, what we have called "The Mother of All Coalitions" is perhaps within reach. Putting aside the right wing's destructive politics for a moment, it's instructive to look at the way the right forged a conjunction of the Christian Coalition, the American Enterprise Institute (and other right wing think tanks) and Grover Norquist's anti-tax outfits which for a time successfully represented shrewd compromises that led to huge political successes.

Another instructive example is the formation of the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) in Mississippi during the sixties. COFO was a broad coalition of radical and liberal groups that coordinated among sometimes contentious groups, policies regarding voting rights and other issues.

2. How is a progressive majority formed?

At the national level, a strong starting point could be to build upon the success of the April 29 march in New York that represented a collaboration of nine major organizations. With the Iraq war becoming increasingly deadly, with occupation inevitably marked by atrocity, with a multitude of

domestic problems underscored by the festering of New Orleans and by galloping attacks on constitutional rights, with wage stagnation and mounting debt - it should be possible to broaden from United for Peace and Justice, Rainbow/PUSH, U.S. Labor Against the War, National Organization for Women, etc., to include organizations like the NAACP, the National Council of Churches, major unions, the AFL-CIO, etc. Starting with an existing coalition of left and left-center forces it should be possible to create a broadened alliance with an eye to defeating the right in the coming elections.

At the local level, largely left groups can vigorously press efforts to find common ground with broader political forces - among communities of color that have the most deeply rooted and consistently progressive views among union activists, among professionals and business people, various civic groups, etc.

Doubtless, left groups based in peace and justice communities have to constitute a starting point and clearly must have a coherent view of what they want as a basis for exploring the possibilities of programmatic cooperation with groups to their right.

3. Is it democratic (small "d") in structure?

Democratic structure and practice are essential at all levels - especially in regard to forging programmatic unity. While left forces need to be clear about their own positions, those positions cannot be imposed upon broader constituencies. Thus, agreement through give-and-take in a democratic context on general principles may be the soundest basis for moving on to more concrete agreements on specific issues - especially in regard to creating an independent issue-oriented constituency to influence the coming elections.

4. Is it electoral in focus? What does it do? How does it relate to the Democratic Party and independent

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## Continuing the Discussion

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parties?

While by no means the only objective of a progressive majority, activity aimed at influencing the elections is vital. (Some elements of the coalition, either by legal constraint or ideology, will not participate in the electoral arena.) As stated before, a progressive majority in developing its own program and building political clout based on that program backed by substantial finances and organization is independent of the Democratic Party. Its immediate aim in the electoral arena (as in all arenas) should be to defeat the right. In meeting that objective, a progressive majority would utilize the most realistic and productive means at its disposal - including support for progressive Democrats, independents, i.e., candidates who support its program.

5. A progressive majority recognizes connections between issues, but does not necessarily have "an anti-imperialist outlook." How does that work?

In today's political climate of relentless attack from the right, it is both possible and necessary to forge alliances on the mandatory basis of connecting issues. For example, the inseparable linkage between the continuing racism and contempt for the needs of impoverished working people victimized by Katrina and the profligate waste of human life and valuable resources in Iraq makes it possible to bring together those primarily motivated by the horror inherent in the government's response to Katrina and those energized to work for an end to the US occupation of Iraq. At the same time, a broad coalition is not required to have a unified ideological conception of world politics. Its attitudes would be shaped by general agreement on a program that would reflect broadly accepted progressive values. At the same time, the left should be committed to educating and advancing its anti-imperialist outlook without making that viewpoint a condition for cooperation with broader political forces.

I'd like to conclude with three obser-

vations that hopefully will continue to fuel discussion:

1. A significant difficulty on the left regarding building a progressive majority is not necessarily a question of understanding the concept. Rather, it may be lack of experience in recent years in working with liberals and the broadly defined political center. For many on the left, the ideological gap between themselves and the center is nearly unbridgeable. However, there is literally no alternative. To believe that the left can make any real progress in the near term on its own (however one defines the left) is a fatal miscalculation. Any hope of defeating the right and affecting meaningful change mandates the building of a left-center (or center-left if one prefers) coalition. That is so on the basis of simple arithmetic, if for no deeper strategic considerations. Some respected voices on the left counsel "keeping on" with traditional protests and efforts to influence public opinion. That is unassailable; but without a grasp of the strategies needed to build and cement a majority capable of turning the country's politics around, there is little hope of short-term success at least.

2. Perhaps the most difficult and intractable problem of building coalitions with the political center is in the realm of global policy. This problem goes back to the onset of the cold war with the split between the anti-communist "cold war liberals" and the pro-peace progressives led by Henry Wallace. The cold warriors insisted upon the inseparability of moderately maintaining basic New Deal programs while militarizing, promoting interventions to "contain communism" and spreading "democratic values" around the world. Vietnam engendered a severe crisis for this large and important current. In the face of Vietnamese resistance and growing antiwar sentiment, fissures appeared in the cold war liberal camp. Under pressure a large segment claimed that Vietnam was a misapplication of containment and entered into alliances with the antiwar movement. Others held onto their embrace of the war

and became the progenitors of neo-conservatism. A strikingly similar trend exists today in relation to the "war on terror." At one pole, is the pro-war wing of the Democratic Party entangled in a corporate web, fearful of being charged with failure to "support our troops," etc. However, similar to Vietnam, there are growing sectors at many levels of government and society who believe that Iraq is a grievous misapplication of the "war on terror." Again, the growing strength of a broadly based antiwar movement is a critical factor in moving those forces (albeit conditionally) into the peace camp and into left-center alliances. On the other hand, "liberal" supporters of the war are drawn inexorably to neo-conservatism. With that, they should be combated and isolated.

3. Regarding CCDS: indisputably, our numbers are small and our geographical reach is limited. However, we have achieved a considerable degree of respect on the left and also enjoy cordial relations with leaders and members of national peace organizations, trade unions, civil rights groups, etc. That should be a sound basis for accelerating discussion, not only within our own organization, but also with increasingly like-minded groups on the left. From there, we can help strengthen those components of the left willing to help build a progressive majority and can facilitate on a variety of levels the creation of organized expressions of that majority.

## Member Only Web Page

*Continued from page 8*

look, for example, cannot be a compulsory condition imposed by left forces. For the anti-war component, in particular, a clear distinction has to be made between a broadly based peace movement and an anti-imperialist movement. Failure to make that distinction sows division and ironically undercuts the building of a majority capable of stopping imperialist wars."

To read the articles in full, go to the CCDS web page: [www.cc-ds.org](http://www.cc-ds.org)

# JOIN THE MEMBERSHIP DISCUSSION ON THE WEB

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puter, the NCC will continue to publish the discussion in the pages of the *Mobilizer* as much as possible. You can also call the CCDS National Office and ask for printed material sent to you for the cost of printing and mailing.

Below are excerpts from the main articles that have been posted on the Members Only discussion page of the web:

## **"CCDS in the Struggle for a Progressive Majority"**

**by Charlene Mitchell (May 23, 2006):**

"The role of CCDS as a socialist organization is not simply to network with others on the left, but to help build a movement. Cooperation will be melded together to the extent that we are able to influence those who influence movements and people. Organic unity of left sectarian organizations is not a realistic or desirable vehicle to forge a center left majority. The energy should be geared to working with movements, organizations, and individuals whose program and tactics help to influence broader constituents in the struggle. It is this approach that will help to raise the level of consciousness without destroying the base."

And further, "UFPJ, plagued with

the disruptive sectarian antics of ANSWER has taken a firmer position to proceed with commonly agreed upon actions despite the negative division sought by ANSWER. In my opinion UFPJ has defined and clarified its role as a coalition against the war in Iraq that brings together the broadest array of movements and organizations, including the anti-imperialist movements, to realize the agreed upon goal. In other words, on program, we must find ways to move together toward a common goal."

## **"Shaping Direction, Exercising Leadership: Critical Issues for Building a Progressive Majority"**

**by Carl Davidson (June 3, 2006):**

"This is elementary, but it needs to be said. If you don't have organized forces on the ground that you can deploy, then you have little or nothing with which to approach another group for the job of coalition building. At best, you can be a catalyst or facilitator for two or more groups who do have some troops to bring together. But catalysts and facilitators without a base community, fortunately or unfortunately, have little power to have an critical impact on the coalition's outcome or direction."

And further, "this leaves us with an

important and ongoing question we have debated since the founding of CC-DS. What should be our most basic unit of mass organization in our communities: not the local coalitions, but the group we bring to the local coalition to be our voice and our troops within it? Is it a neighborhood socialist club? A peace and justice group? Or what? That takes us beyond the immediate topic here, but at some point, better sooner than later, we will have to, since it's very much connected."

## **"A Progressive Majority - What It Is and How to Build It"**

**by Mark Solomon (May 23, 2006):**

"A common program does not imply unprincipled compromises that can only reduce the coalition to an ineffectual echo of the dominant political culture. Quite the contrary, a coalition of center and left has to grasp the interconnections between issues. It has to forge unbreakable connections among issues of class, racial and gender justice as well as peace and economic survival."

And further, "At the same time, a progressive majority is not, nor can it become, a vessel of ideological uniformity. An anti-imperialist out-

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