

**Democratic Socialists of America  
National Political Committee  
Minutes of Meeting of September 15-16, 2007**

Present: Theresa Alt, Virginia Franco, David Green, Mike Hirsch, David Knuttunen, Simone Morgen, Michele Rossi, Joseph Schwartz, Tim Sears, Herb Shore, John Strauss, Frank Llewellyn (National Director), David Duhalde (YDS Organizer). Absent: Nichole Iaquinto, Maria Svart (excused), Corey Walker (excused)

Simone Morgen chaired Saturday morning.

The Committee discussed the National Director's report, and Frank Llewellyn gave further details. There was particular interest in international observers from India requesting to attend the National Convention, questions around using cyberspace for organizing, Frank's travel, and the politics of healthcare.

David Duhalde recapped his YDS report, and it was discussed. David Knuttunen requested a copy of David's activist packet and offered to copy and distribute it to other NPC members. The discussion turned to YDS and DSA and how the two parts could work together. We evaluated the recent YDS/DSA retreat and considered it a success; David Duhalde will circulate a contact list of participants.

The Personnel Committee's evaluation of the YDS Organizer was discussed in executive session. Afterwards David Knuttunen moved that we thank David Duhalde for his outstanding work as youth organizer and that we accept the report. John Strauss seconded this and it passed unanimously. There was a standing ovation for David Duhalde later when he returned to the room.

David Green chaired Saturday afternoon.

At the request of Boston DSA members, David Knuttunen moved that the NPC endorse the October 27th national mobilization of United for Peace and Justice to end the war in Iraq. Theresa Alt seconded the motion. Mike Hirsch offered an amendment, accepted as friendly, that the NPC write a statement to distribute at the mobilization. The motion passed unanimously. Mike volunteered to write the statement or to get Jason Schulman to do it.

David Knuttunen presented the Budget and Finance report, where little had changed from previous trends. Discussion followed, stressing the importance of showing program activity and recruiting new members.

We specifically discussed the back dues that DSA owes to the Socialist International. Joseph Schwartz moved that the NPC endorses DSA's continued membership in the SI. Once we raise another \$3000 for the purpose of paying the dues, we authorize adding \$6000 in PAC money, the \$9000 to be sent once we are allowed extra time to raise the remainder. Frank Llewellyn is also to try to negotiate lower dues in the future. David

Knuttunen seconded the motion; there was discussion pro and con, but the motion passed without objecting votes. David Knuttunen pledged \$500, David Green \$500, and Joe Schwartz \$200 towards the needed money.

Materials concerning program activity around the Economic Justice Agenda had been distributed in advance of the meeting. We discussed possible activities, including local meetings to evaluate candidates in terms of the agenda.

The document itself was then discussed. Missing items are: jobs, threat of recession, immigration, environment, global warming and public transportation as a solution, alternative energy research leading to quality jobs, college education and student debt. The NPC will take responsibility for writing up additional sections that address these gaps, as well as taking into account the substantive comments that were received too late to include in the current version. The current version plus the addenda will be presented for discussion on DSAMember before the convention and at the convention.

Tim Sears will write up his earlier proposed amendment.

David Knuttunen will write up immigration.

Herb Shore will write on environment and jobs.

David Duhalde will approach Nicole Iaquinto (or possibly Steve Early) about student debt and college education financing.

David Green reported on his conversation with David Bonior, Edwards' campaign manager. The NPC then discussed presidential politics.

The draft Political Priorities Resolution was discussed and two changes suggested. The latest draft now reads:

#### DSA Priorities Resolution

#### DRAFT by NPC

Whereas, DSA has developed an Economic Justice Agenda that suggests priority areas for discussion during election campaigns, positions useful for evaluating candidates, and an agenda to pursue if and when election results open the way for significant social change,

And whereas, the Economic Justice Agenda document gives an analysis useful in explaining our positions,

Therefore, be it resolved that

1. DSA will continue to work against the war.
2. Prior to the elections of 2008 DSA will attempt to make the E.J. agenda and analysis part of the discussion of candidacies for national offices, particularly for the House, and

3. After 2008, if progressive candidates prevail, DSA will concentrate on advocating for:
  - single payer health care (the NPC and ND will explore the possibility of a speakers tour of Canadians involved in their single-payer system – tour would aim to dispel inaccurate criticisms of single-payer that are resurfacing all over the mass media)
  - a fair federal tax system based on ability to pay and a shift in resources away from redundant and unneeded military expenditures toward programs that meet people's needs,
  - the human rights of workers including the rights of immigrant workers and laws that support the rights of workers to organize.
  
4. DSA will also support education around:
  - all of the issues in the E.J. Agenda
  - leftist movements and successes in Latin America
  - solidarity economics
  - environmental issues that can only be addressed by confronting corporations.
  
5. To accomplish all this, DSA will support existing locals and help to start new ones; in particular the staff and NPC will work with individuals who wish to restart or revitalize locals in which we have significant number of members, but little to no organized DSA activity.
  
6. Through all of the above efforts, adult DSA will work to strengthen YDS and build greater cooperation and mutual, productive interaction.

Joe Schwartz will rewrite the priorities resolution and send it to Mike Hirsch for editing and then to the Steering Committee. The SC will next meet on October 1.

Discussion of Convention logistics followed.

David Knuttunen chaired on Sunday morning.

Discussion of the proposed Convention schedule was first. There needs to be an orientation and explanation of the rules. Locals should be encouraged to bring written reports, with only a minute for oral presentations. On Saturday morning there will be a powerpoint presentation on the Economic Justice document, followed by discussion of the document and a vote on it. Then on Saturday afternoon there will be workshops on taxation, etc, how to do issue area work on the agenda. A plenary on Latin America will not be part of the Convention schedule per se but may become the Saturday evening event, tying in with immigration, if Corey Walker and Jose LaLuz speak. On Sunday morning there will first be workshops on how to carry out the work, and then afterwards the implementation session where people volunteer what they will do. Theresa moved and John seconded that the Convention schedule and selection of workshop leaders be

referred to the Steering Committee. Michele Rossi made a friendly amendment that all NPC members email suggestions for workshop leaders to the SC. This passed unanimously.

There was further discussion of convention logistics and the proposed preconvention discussions on DSAMember.

Frank will draw up a tentative Convention Committee roster and submit it to the Steering Committee. Tim moved to authorize the SC to nominate convention committees subject to approval by email by the NPC. John seconded, and this passed unanimously.

David Green moved and John Strauss seconded that we notify the membership that the preconvention discussion will be on DSAMember; Frank and Mike to see to it that this gets posted. The motion passed unanimously.

Process for preparing the NPC report: all NPC members will send suggestions to Herb Shore; Herb will draft a report and send it to the Steering Committee, which will then produce a final draft to go to all delegates a week in advance of the convention or earlier.

The death of Dorothy Healey leaves the list of Vice Chairs short one woman. Several names were mentioned, and the decision was to consider Elaine Bernard and Ruth Spitz, possibly adding both.

Joseph Schwartz chaired Sunday afternoon.

Theresa moved to adjourn the NPC; John seconded, and the NPC adjourned to allow time for meetings of DSA PAC and the DSA Fund Board.

The NPC reconvened. There was discussion of the reports on *Democratic Left*, the website, Personnel Committee resources, and the work of the Political Education Committee.

David Knuttunen moved and Joe Schwartz seconded that the NPC express condolences to Harris Gruman on the passing of his father. This passed unanimously, and Frank agreed to send a short letter.

Tim Sears moved that the dispute about minutes of the previous NPC meeting be referred to the Steering Committee; Michele seconded, and there were no objections.

After evaluations John moved to adjourn; Michele seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Theresa Alt