

THE VOORHIS VOICE

Liberal Voice of the Pomona Valley

November, 2011

www.claremontdems.org

MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Tuesday, Nov. 8

Election Day

DCC ballot recommendations:

- (1) **Sue Keith** for Citrus College Trustee
- (2) **Hilary La Conte** for Claremont Unified School District Board Member

Friday, Nov. 11, 2011, 12-2 PM

Monthly Luncheon at the LYL Gardens Restaurant

Speaker: Peter Coye, Claremont resident and CEO of California Energy & Power.

He will be speaking on renewable energy, especially wind energy,
and his company's creation of a new wind turbine.

921 W. Foothill Blvd., Claremont, 91711. Tel. 626-9151.

Cost is ten dollars; meal is served family style. No pork on menu; many vegetarian dishes.

Monday Nov. 28, 2011, 7 – 9:30 PM

Monthly Membership Meeting at Porter Hall

601 Mayflower Rd., Pilgrim Place Campus, Claremont

Access Porter Hall from the west side of Berkeley St. at 6th Street

Sunday Dec. 4, 2011, 4-6 PM

DCC Holiday Party

Napier Center, Pilgrim Place

DCC's "Progressive Caucus" Resolution

The following resolution was passed unanimously at the September 26, 2011 general membership meeting of the DCC, and will be forward to the LA County Executive Committee.

WHEREAS: The Progressive Caucus of the California Democratic Party has not suggested that any Democrat leave the party or vote for a candidate of some other party or do nothing in support of whoever is the Democratic Party candidate for the Presidency in 2012; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: That the Democratic Club of Claremont strongly urges the Executive Committee of the California Democratic Party to unconditionally re-certify the Progressive Caucus of the Party as soon as possible, certainly no later than the November meeting of the Committee.

Proposed OWS Resolution

This resolution was approved by the Issues Committee on Oct. 8, and will be voted on at the next membership meeting on Nov. 28, 2011.

WHEREAS Wall Street's reckless investments, white collar crimes, and dismal incompetence brought about the financial crisis of 2008, and

WHEREAS taxpayers patiently paid billions of dollars to clean up Wall Street's mess, rescuing from self-destruction the very financial institutions that provoked the crisis, and

WHEREAS, after paying themselves vast bonuses with taxpayer funds, Wall Street tycoons impudently resisted government regulation of their industry in the public interest, and

WHEREAS we are sick and tired of financiers who enrich themselves by fraud against the public while mocking justice; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Democratic Club of Claremont applauds and fully shares the righteous indignation of the "Occupy Wall Street" protesters in lower Manhattan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Democratic Club of Claremont approves a donation of twenty-five dollars from the treasury in support of this movement as an expression of our gratitude.

Money orders only; no checks. Mail to: Occupy Wall Street, 118A Fulton Street #205, New York, NY 10038

The following "press release" was sent to local newspapers and distributed at the DCC booth during Village Venture celebrations.

Democrats Organize Relief Fund for Billionaires

By Ivan Light

Claremont Oct. 20, 2011 --- The Democratic Club of Claremont has announced the formation of a trickle-down fund for qualifying billionaires. The DCC will solicit donations to this fund from the public, then turn over all the money collected to the Koch Brothers for immediate distribution among the nation's billionaires.

"If billionaires have more money," said DCC Special Events Chairperson, Carolee Monroe, "then jobs will trickle down. So it makes sense to give our money to them now without waiting for the House of Representatives to do it for us," she said. "We just want to transfer money to the super rich right now in order to start those jobs trickling down. Why wait?"

As Monroe explained, Claremont Democrats were convinced by recent Republican plans for creating jobs by additionally enriching the very wealthy. So, the Claremont Democrats decided to speed up the trickling down process with voluntary donations obtained from the public. Needing jobs the most, the unemployed are "particularly encouraged" to transfer whatever money they still have to the very wealthy, said Monroe.

Challenged about self-contradiction, Monroe conceded that the billionaire relief plan does depart from traditional Democratic programs for job creation, which have in the past involved putting more money into the hands of consumers rather than those of the very wealthy. It is obvious, however, said Monroe, that, as Rick Perry has proven, "the current recession is caused by lack of income among the very rich, and excessive income among the non-wealthy." Republicans have been right about that all along, she added, but the way is now open for an exciting realignment in American politics with voluntary contributions to the wealthy supplementing what Congress can do to enrich them further. "That is the American way."

Republicans Can Find No Waste in Military Budget

Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Congressman Buck McKeon (R-CA) asked for a report on consequences of potential cuts to the defense budget. McKeon's report "did not once contain the words "waste," "fraud," "abuse," "overhead" or "officer creep" in a budget so notorious for same that it has kept itself exempt from financial audits for decades-and plans to do so for the foreseeable future."

Source: Center for Defense Information, www.cdi.org.

Two-Thirds Favor Tax Increases for Wealthiest

"A New York Times/CBS poll released [Oct. 25, 2011] found that 65 percent of Americans say taxes should be increased on households earning \$1 million or more, while 66 percent say money and wealth in the country should be distributed more evenly. Another 69 percent say the policies of Republicans in Congress favor the rich, while 67 percent say it is a bad idea to lower taxes for large corporations."

Source: Richard A. Oppel, "Perry plan would grant big tax break to wealthiest." *New York Times*, Oct. 25, 2011

Your Invitation to DCC Holiday Party

By Carolee Monroe



Hey, you!

Yeah, you!

All current, past and even prospective members of our Democratic Club of Claremont are invited to our annual holiday party on Sunday, December 4, at the Napier Center, Pilgrim Place. The event will begin at 4:00 PM and end at 6:00 PM. A buffet dinner and beverages will be served.

Not only will our annual party celebrate another great year of activity and honor the many volunteers who worked to make it so, it is being expanded to include fund raising and dues renewal.

Because next year is the first for the new Spring primary structure along with being a presidential election year, we are asking that invitees come to the event prepared to make a donation toward the campaign and temporary headquarters that we will need. Furthermore, because it is the end of the

year, we hope you will consider renewing your membership at this event. In other words, please bring your checkbook and give generously.

Our annual holiday party primarily recognizes our member activists. Come join in honoring them! The event also will jump-start us into 2012. We will encounter the new format of electing primary candidates in the Spring and we will need a headquarters for the Fall general election. For all these reasons, we need your involvement: you are needed to participate both in person and financially. Please get started with us on Sunday, December 4.

The Napier Community Center is located in Pilgrim Place, across from the entrance to Decker Hall. The center was formerly the Administration Building before its renovation.

Is There a Class War in the United States?

By Charles Bayer

Congressional Republican leaders have recently called the President's proposal to control the deficit, partly with tax increases on the affluent, "class warfare." But, Republicans have always been good at the use of language, even when the words have little to do with reality.

The term "class warfare" dates back to the medieval insistence that the lord of the manor had the sole right to control both the grain supplies and the bread ovens. The peasants revolted and there arose a clash between those two very separate classes. Guess who won?

With the rise of democratic societies, it became clear that no one class had the right to dominate everything, and that some system of equity had to replace feudalism. The Marxists picked up the language and held that any economic system which only benefited the rich at the expense of the working class needed to be challenged. The Republicans, in an attempt to label Obama's proposal as Marxist, regurgitated the phrase.

Is America currently being seized by Marxist-oriented class warfare? The best evidence would be the rapid flow of goods, money and power down, so that the already powerful and the rich lost massive ground and the poor and middle-class gained it. Society would then find most of the economic power in the hands of the proletariat. But the exact opposite has been taking place. Our current economic and political format guarantees that the already affluent receive the lion's share of everything, while allowing some of the goodies to "trickle down." Supply side economics loads money at the top, assuming that the accumulated wealth in the hands of entrepreneurs will generate jobs and therefore some of the overflow would leak on everyone below. Not even Milton Friedman, however, envisaged the day when instead of trickling down, wealth gushed up—and stayed there.

If there is class warfare these days, it is not in the development of an economic system where the power belongs to the workers, the poor and the outsiders, but is deposited almost solely with corporate interests, together with the already rich and the politicians they can buy. If it's class warfare, guess who is winning? The top 1% of the population earns a staggering 20% of the nation's net income. In the meantime almost forty-five million Americans live in poverty, one out of five children are in want of the basic resources needed to sustain a decent life, and tens of millions have no health insurance. The President's proposals at their most extreme wouldn't make a dent in that mal-distribution.

At the same time there is a concerted effort to shred the safety net woven by FDR and LBJ, even while the nation's wealth continues to gush up. That's class warfare! It is a belligerent assault on the poor, the left out, the unemployed, the ill-educated and the nobodies, on behalf of keeping the way clear so that the biggest hogs may stay at the table. The affluent have the political movers almost totally in their camp. Not only Republicans but also a sizeable smattering of Democrats are deep in the pockets of these right-wing power brokers.

No matter what sounds we are now hearing from the likes of the Tea Party, I am convinced that at heart the vast majority of Americans believe that health care for all, the social safety net, decent wages for workers, widespread educational opportunities, good schools and a society that cares about its elderly are all more important than preserving the entirety of the enormous wealth of America's most affluent. If America is not built on the notion of fairness, what have we to offer the rest of the world? My guess is that sooner or later the American people will wake up and realize just how badly they have been had, and how cheaply they have been bought. What we might hope to achieve is an equitable balance of America's wealth. That is not the product of class warfare, but of economic and political justice.

Rich Getting Richer?

“WASHINGTON — The top 1 percent of earners more than doubled their share of the nation's income over the last three decades, the Congressional Budget Office said in a new report likely to figure prominently in the escalating political fight over how to revive the economy, create jobs and lower the federal debt. In addition, the report said, government policy has become less redistributive since the late 1970s, doing less to reduce the concentration of income. “ Source: Robert Pear,” “Top earners doubled share of nation's income, study finds.” *New York Times* Oct. 25, 2011

Gradgrind Grinds Again

By Merrill Ring

Former South Carolina congressman (1993-99, 2005-2011) Bob Inglis breaks with his fellow hard-core conservatives about climate change. Climate change is a fact. That acknowledgment is very welcome.

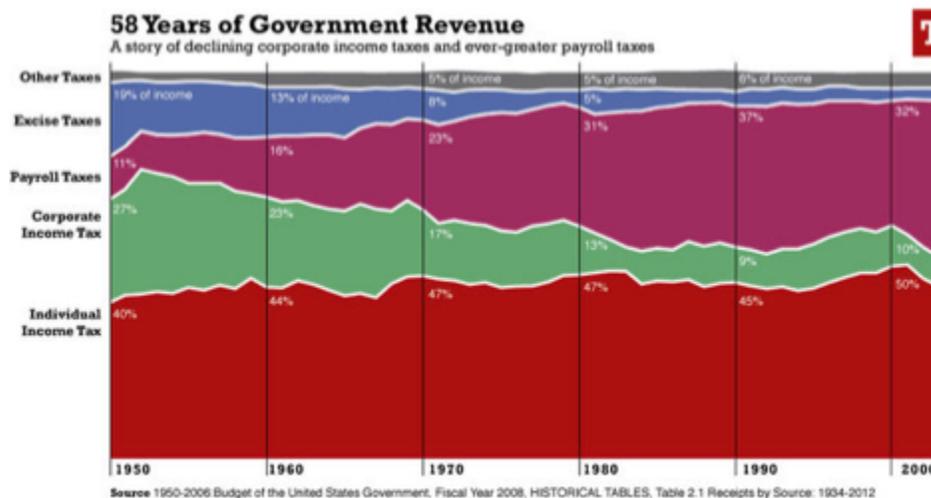
Nonetheless, his tools of analysis are dull. Inglis claims that conservatives are the party of fact in contrast to “sentiments,” the standpoint of liberals. His thesis is that on the issue of climate change his fellow conservatives have overwhelmingly gone off the rails, have become adherents of sentiment and so are bedfellows of the liberals. Now it is true that the conservative view of climate change has nothing to support it in the matter of facts, but Inglis is wrong that his fellows are adhering to sentiments (say care and concern): they are plain irrational on the subject.

But let's think about that contrast between fact and sentiment and Inglis' allocation of them to the two reigning political ideologies in this country. First, sentiment. Liberals take sentiment into account, in advocating policies that include the effects on (roughly) the feelings of human beings, something Inglis seems to think should not happen. But that there are those effects on people are also facts. So

the contrast should be between concern for how policies, etc, affect something more than people's pocketbooks and concern for how such things affect only one's pocketbook, which is what Inglis takes to be the province of facts.

The idea that the conservatives rejoice in facts, where facts are understood in the most narrow way was lampooned by Charles Dickens in *Hard Times*. Thomas Gradgrind, educator, denies young Sissy Jupe a carpet with a pattern of flowers on the grounds that beauty, emotion and imagination are not to be allowed in human life, that 'Fact, fact, fact' conceived of as calculation of rational self-interest, is everything. Inglis, and no doubt conservatives normally (other than in matters of climate change), are followers of Gradgrind. One hundred fifty years later, Charles Dickens is still on target. That's a fact.

Whose Share of Taxes is Dropping and Whose Increasing? You Decide



The Occupy Movement is No Tea Party – Yet

By Bob Gerecke

Shortly after the so-called Tea Party movement appeared, right-wing financiers hijacked it by funding experienced Republican operatives to set up websites, email networks, conferences, etc. They redirected the movement's anger - which was originally at the bailout of the big bad banks - away from the banks which had caused the Great Recession and toward government, in alliance with the Republican Party.

The Occupy Wall Street movement will not be so easily fooled. Its participants have correctly identified our economic problem as the concentration of income, wealth and tax breaks in the hands of the wealthiest 1% of individuals and corporations. It has explicitly rejected any attempt by Democrats or anyone else with establishment credentials to co-opt it. It has also resisted making explicit policy demands, which could split its members and invite detailed critiques. These are its strengths.

However, unless it elects allies to public office – as the Tea Party has done -- it will have little effect on public policy. Some Democratic officeholders will honestly and gladly embrace it; some will pretend to do so. Republicans will either smear it or pretend to understand it while miss-stating its significance and its demands. In order to have the kind of power in Congress which Tea Party candidates have, the OWS movement will have to get behind some existing or new candidates whom it can trust to be progressive in action as well as in rhetoric.

If it fails to accomplish that, it will have been a flash in the pan and an opportunity squandered.

It will be tempted to back third-party or independent candidates. This would be a mistake, since they would have little chance of being elected. Its best opportunity lies in using the primary election system to nominate true progressives as the Democratic Party candidates. Time will tell whether it will be shrewd enough to adopt that strategy, but I am not optimistic. I fear that it will split the progressive vote by supporting candidates who run against Democrats in the general election, thus ensuring the victory of conservative Republicans.

Claremont High School Students at the DNC

By Dixie Morrison

Politically aware citizens remember the first national election that they were able to follow as informed Americans. For me, as is probably the case for most Millennials, that election was 2008. I still feel lucky that the first election I was old enough to appreciate was so rich with history, issues, and symbolism —its “unprecedented” nature was probably what inspired so many young voters to turn out that year. 2012 will likely be less magical, so extra effort will be needed to bring young adults to the voting booth. Claremont High School students should be encouraged to go to the Democratic National Convention next year, and their town should take an interest in introducing them to politics in action.

Some numbers: fifty-two percent of young citizens voted in 2008, while only eleven percent voted in 2010. Among the various reasons for this decline, the most important may be the simplest: young people just weren't enthused about the 2010 midterms. Midterms are less glamorous than presidential elections, and 2010 treated voters to Medicare chatter instead of hope and change. No wonder the youth vote took a pass. They remembered that politics are boring and mean-spirited, and slept in.

Of course, American politics don't have to be mean-spirited, and they are never boring to those of us with an interest in current events. We who follow politics all fell in wonky love at some point, but among young people at least, the uninitiated still outnumber the informed. Politics just aren't rousing on the surface, and that's why so few young Americans are roused to vote every four (let alone two) years.

This year's DNC website extolls “the thrill, excitement and exhilaration of witnessing our nation's Democratic leaders share their vision, ideas and passion with fellow Democrats from all over the United States.” The advertising is biased, but there is something to be said for watching a sitting president give what will need to be one of the most astounding speeches of a distinguished oratorical career to tens of thousands of cheering voters. This isn't a matter of partisanship; I expect the Republican National Convention will be equally exhilarating for conservatives. But the Democratic Party has historically been more appealing to young voters, and so has the better chance of introducing another generation to the joys of civic engagement. Claremont, like the rest of America, has a stake in facilitating that introduction.

Dixie Morrison is a freshman at Pomona College.

What is the TAIPD?

The American Institute for Progressive Democracy (TAIPD) is a 503C public service, non-profit organization formed in 2007 by members of the Democratic Club of Claremont. The TAIPD sponsors programs such as its recent and successful Forum on the Citizen's United decision, and also publishes liberal/progressive material on its web site. Most articles are written by Claremonters; they are very useful to understanding liberal/progressive ideas. New material goes up at the end of the month. The material posed is short, accessible and sparse enough to permit a reader quickly to browse the collection. DCC members should make it a point to check out the material. Go to www.taipd.org. Contributions to the TAIPD are tax deductible.

Editorial

By Ivan Light

Watch the money. During 2008 election campaign, Obama received more Wall Street funding than McCain. Headlines now say that Obama's reelection campaign has received only a tenth of the financial support from Wall Street that GOP candidates have received to date from Wall Street, but he's received twice as much total funding as have all the GOP candidates together. Obama's abundant funding is coming from small (e.g. less than \$250) contributors. The GOP depends on big Wall Street donors for cash; but Wall Street is not giving yet. Two months ago Perry appeared to be the most likely GOP candidate; now, it's Romney. The ultimate GOP candidate is still in doubt. Although Wall Street has abundant money, Wall Street has not opened its piggy bank yet, and is presumably waiting to see who will emerge as the Republican candidate. In the event that Perry is the Republican candidate, with his crack-pot agenda, some Wall Street money will go to Obama, who will not need his left base for reelection. In that case, Obama will run to the right of center. However, in the event that Romney becomes the GOP candidate, as seems now most likely, Wall Street will back him over Obama. In that case, lacking Wall Street largesse, Obama will be forced to the left where his base of small-gift contributors are found. He will really need those small contributors. Possibly this shift is already at work, and accounts for Obama's recent opening to the left. If Obama gets his money from Wall Street, Obama belongs to Wall Street, but not otherwise. Best guess now: Wall Street will buy Romney, not Obama. Does this possibility offer a feeble ray of hope for progressives?

The Voorhis Voice is published by the Democratic Club of Claremont, PO Box 1201, Claremont CA 91711. The newsletter's name commemorates the late Jerry Voorhis, a talented and courageous Congress member from Claremont.

Newsletter Editor

Ivan Light: Email him at claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com

**Any registered Democrat may join the Democratic Club of Claremont
on our web site!**

Access our website: <http://www.claremontdems.org>

Select: Get Involved > Join Us (Complete the form. Then...)

Select: Get Involved > Donate to the Club This will take you to the Act Blue website where you can pay your annual dues online.

P.S. – Part of your dues and contributions may be contributed to Federal and State candidates. Individual contributions will be deposited into the club's Federal account, subject to the Federal Elections Campaign Act. Non-individual contributions and contributions of individuals who so request will be deposited into the club's State account. Contributions are limited under State law. No anonymous contributions of more than \$50 will be accepted. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, address, occupation and employer of each individual contributor. Political contributions are not tax-deductible. FPPC #841491. FEC #C00404319

