

Committees of  
Correspondence for  
Democracy  
and Socialism



# CCDS Convention School July 18-20, 2013 Pittsburgh, PA



Martin L. King, Jr.



Dolores Huerta



Ella May Wiggins



Stokely Carmichael

*Martin Luther King was 26 when he led the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Dolores Huerta was 29 when she organized the Agricultural Workers Association (forerunner to the United Farm Workers), Stokely Carmichael was 25 when he was elected chair of SNCC and led in the organization of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization, and Ella May Wiggins was 28 when she emerged as a leader in the Gastonia Mill Worker's Strike. Young people have always been at the forefront of the struggle for social and economic justice in this country - whether it be fueled by youthful idealism, the lack of material encumbrances, the impatience born of the refusal to accept the status quo, or the simple questioning of authority which often withers as one ages. What is often lacking, however, is the opportunity to collectively study, discuss, and share ideas with one another.*

**Purpose.** The main goal of the Convention School is to bring together young activists to foster lasting bonds of solidarity, shared political understanding, and an esprit de corps. Assisting the next generation to ready itself for sustained struggle is of great importance to the future of the socialist, and all democratic, movements. We believe this can be accomplished through a face-to-face gathering, which encourages open discussion. Constructing a common framework will be built through a series of online, pre-convention discussions, and a common reading list.

**Time and place.** The occasion of the 2013 CCDS convention is a great opportunity for this venture. With a humble and earnest approach, it is hoped that benefits will flow in two directions. On one hand, school participants will benefit from contact with a people's organization working at the national level, as well as from contact with international convention guests. On the other, the inspiring presence of a concentrated gathering of youth will remind convention delegates of their collective capacity to carry out nationwide socialist organizing and to care for the future.

## Online Pre-Conference Discussions (June-July)

**June 16, 2013: 1st Online preparatory meeting.** A two hour orientation session where on the facilitator will open the meeting and participants will introduce themselves to each other. The facilitator will discuss the school's schedule of events and will take questions.

**June 30, 2013: 2nd Online preparatory meeting.** The materials for this session are The Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, and the video introduction by Zach Robinson. All materials are available online, and should be viewed before the discussion.

**July 14, 2013: 3rd Online preparatory meeting.** Discussion will focus on two chapters from the book Civil Rights Unionism, by Robert R. Korstad and the movie At The River I Stand, about the struggle for union recognition by the Memphis sanitation workers. At the end of the meeting, the facilitator will take questions regarding logistics for the upcoming convention school.

## Convention School Schedule (July 18-21)

### Thursday

9:00–10:30: Registration and breakfast over rolls, fruit & coffee. Special guests: CCDS co-chairs, and/or Advisory Board members.

10:45–12:15: Tim Johnson on the history of democratic struggles, from the American, French and Haitian revolutions to the labor-civil rights alliance.

12:15 –1:30: lunch

1:30–2:45: David Schwartzman on preventing catastrophic climate change.

2:45–3:15: break

3:15–4:30: Janet Tucker on capitalism, war & peace.

4:30 – 5:00: Informal discussion

### Friday

The day's activities focus on a series of two discussions led by school participants. Each discussion will have abroad focus on long-term strategies.

8:30-9: Check-in and breakfast over rolls, fruit & coffee. Special guests: international visitors.

10:45 - 12:15: This discussion will focus on what kind of coalition will be necessary to bring about a qualitative change in the democratic structure of this country. What social forces (class, nationality, etc.), who (if any single force) should play the leading role, what kind of organizational form (if any) should it take, etc.

12:15-1:30: lunch

2:45–4:15: This discussion will focus on what role should the organized left play in the above coalition? How do we define the "left" – who's in and who's out and what difference does it make? Does the left have an independent role apart from participating in the mass movement? Is there a need for the left to have an organizational form?

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### Saturday

TBA: Collective preparation of participants' report

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### Sunday

12 Noon: Brief meeting between incoming NCC and representatives of school participants and organizers to discuss their respective reports.