

## California Democratic Convention

Compared with Des Moines's national Democrat Iowa Caucus, San Jose's California Democratic Convention is covered only by local media.

This year is also quite different from the last California Democratic Convention held four years ago at the same San Jose Convention Center. That time I used my Comparative Policy Review editor's name card to easily obtain a Press tag and seated in the best stage of the hall to watch and listen the U.S. Vice President in a short distance. Not only delegations inside the hall, but also protesters outside of the hall, all knew that Mr. Gore would become the President that year in 2000. Today, however, there was no way for me to enter the hall before and during the meeting. I had to wait until the meeting was over to enter the hall.

I first greeted three young members from California Peace Action ([www.californiapeaceaction.org](http://www.californiapeaceaction.org)) since a friend asked me to attend their press release. I know this organization before, and I remember once I talked with one of its staff. He told me that they admired Congresswoman Barbara Lee but they intentionally not to use her name, for the purpose to win more moderate people. It is a public educational organization, so instead of endorsing particular candidates, they list candidates' policy in three point platform: 1. Support human rights and democracy, 2. Reduce and control the nuclear threat, 3. Cooperate with the world community. It becomes apparent that Dennis Kucinich and Al Sharpton are the favorite candidates in all these three point platform. This organization's work is quite impressive, too. A young member told me how he "educated" Congressman Mike Honda (Democrat from my San Jose district) on a specific issue: he followed Honda in every meeting and repeated the same question in the public, until Honda changed his "wrong" position.

I then greeted Kucinich supporters. I talked with a gentleman holding a big banner, and told him I am a member of Friends of Kucinich, Japan. I regret that I also should hold our FOKJ logo. I did not join with them, though, because I also wanted to talk with other candidates' supporters.

Howard Dean's supporters have quite diversified background. It seems some Democrats just want to pick anyone who is more famous to beat up Bush. John Kerry's supporters brought the largest banner but their number is not as large as their banner. I did not find Dick Gephardt and Al Sharpton's tables or supporters (Moseley Braun has dropped off the race). John Edwards and Joe Lieberman have a small table each inside the hall. Instead of representing all origins of Democrats, Lieberman has become a voice only for Israel. One of his badges advertises: "Pro-Israel = Pro-Democracy".

It is a little surprise to see about two hundred Wesley Clark supporters holding various plates, such as "Silicon Valley for Clark", "Academy for Clark". Obviously, they are well mobilized from other cities. I went to their rally, and listened local politicians and Clark's son praising the retired general. I recalled watching an TV interview with former President Jimmy Carter, in which he predicted that Bush will win. Carter is wise to warn the Democrats.

As in the last convention or any Democratic gatherings, Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr.'s followers are better organized to take collective actions in public situations. Although their big banner calling LaRouche "the forgotten man's president", he is not an "outsider"

of Washington politics (I received quite informative and interesting writings of/about him from an emailing list). Rather than a politician, he is a mix of strategist, thinker and cult prophet. Nonetheless, the Democratic Party is blessed to have various orientations.

Although this year's convention is not "hot", it is wrong to downgrade the determination of California democrats to expel Bush out of the White House. As my friend Morgan Wines stated: "This election battle is not to revenge, it is for our survive."

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