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DESIGNATED AREAS HIGHER 50¢

DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION



JAY L. CLENDENIN Los Angeles Times

SHE'S ALL IN: "We are on the same team," Hillary Rodham Clinton, here with daughter Chelsea, told the Democratic convention crowd in Denver. "And none of us can sit on the sidelines." Questions remain about how the roll call vote will go.

Clinton calls on her party to end its rift

She puts tensions aside to give Barack Obama the boost he needed most, insisting: 'He must be our president.'

By MARK Z. BARABAK
Times Staff Writer

DENVER — Hillary Rodham Clinton, accepting defeat with grace and generosity, moved to close the divide among fellow Democrats on Tuesday night by offering a forceful and unequivocal endorsement of her fierce rival, Barack Obama.

"Barack Obama is my candidate," she said to a thunderous roar from Democratic convention delegates, whose allegiance was split nearly evenly during a long and contentious primary season. "And he must be our president."

In a speech anticipated for weeks, ever since her historic bid for the White House fell agonizingly shy, Clinton urged her supporters to value party over pettiness and join her in making the Illinois senator's cause their own.

"Whether you voted for me, or voted for Barack, the time is now to unite as a single party with a single purpose," Clinton said, as delegates waved signs reading "Hillary" on one side and "Unity" on the other. "We are on the same team," Clinton said, "and none of us can sit on the sidelines."

She offered the briefest of kind words for Republican Sen. John McCain of Arizona, a personal friend but also Obama's foe in the fall campaign. "He has served our country with honor and courage," Clinton said. But she quickly added, "We don't need four more years of the last eight years."

The appearance capped a day again dominated by the dynastic intrigue surrounding the New York senator; her husband, former President Bill Clinton; and their grudging

eclipse by Obama and his supporters.

It came as the message emanating from the Denver convention hall abruptly pivoted from biography to an emphasis on the differences between Obama and McCain. "If he's the answer," New York Gov. David Paterson taunted from the stage, "then the question must be ridiculous."

The shift came after some Democrats griped about Monday's feel-good program, intended to leaven Obama's lofty [See Convention, Page A14]

NEWS ANALYSIS

So far, Obama's agenda a no-show

Party divisions have gotten in the way of the message.

By DOYLE MCMANUS
and ROBIN ABCARIAN
Times Staff Writers

DENVER — This week's Democratic convention sought to relaunch Barack Obama's presidential campaign by doing three things: Healing the party's internal rift, showing voters who Obama is, and spelling out more clearly what he would do as president, especially on the economy. But at the halfway point, the convention still seemed, at best, to have accomplished Step 1.

Hillary Rodham Clinton made a major effort in her Tuesday night speech to bring her supporters fully into the Obama camp, insisting that "the time is now to unite as a single party with a single purpose." Obama's wife, Michelle, aided by her telegenic daughters, Malia and Sasha, made a modest start Monday at showing the nominee's side as a family man.

But as for how Obama would tackle the voters' top concern, the nation's slumping economy, the convention has [See Analysis, Page A16]

West grapples with way to strike back at Kremlin

Moscow recognizes the independence of Georgia's separatist regions, in a blow to the U.S. and its allies.

By PAUL RICHTER
and SERGEI L. LOIKO
Times Staff Writers

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration and its European allies, stung by Russia's formal recognition of two separatist Georgian enclaves, faced new pressure Tuesday to strike

back diplomatically and politically against the Kremlin's widening move to assert its power in the Caucasus.

U.S. officials, who have shunned a military response, did not publicly specify available options. But privately, they cited the possibility of excluding Russia from a number of international institutions, such as the World Trade Organization. They also could try to pressure Moscow through economic measures that pinch the wallets or limit the mobility of Russia's wealthy elite and middle class, including restrictions on travel to the West. Leading Western European

members of the old Cold War coalition reached out Tuesday to reassure former Soviet republics following Moscow's recognition of the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, in Estonia, said the Russian move "contradicts the principle of territorial integrity." British Foreign Minister David Miliband planned a visit to Ukraine today.

Meanwhile, a U.S. military official confirmed that the Coast Guard cutter Dallas would not unload supplies in the Georgian port of Poti, but denied that the change in U.S. [See Caucasus, Page A6]

Poverty down in L.A., up in U.S.

Federal census data reflect this decade's economic boom but not this year's downturn.

By RICH CONNELL
and DAVID PIERSON
Times Staff Writers

Poverty across Southern California declined significantly during the first seven years of the decade, a period marked by a booming economy, gentrifying neighborhoods and soaring housing prices, according to census data released Tuesday.

Bucking a national trend, Los Angeles County's poverty rate dropped notably between 2000 and 2007, the data showed, with the percentage of residents living below the federal poverty level falling from 17.9% in 2000 to 14.7% last year. Similar declines occurred in Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura counties. By contrast, the national poverty [See Census, Page A21]

COLUMN ONE

Signing up for her future

After a life shaped by a husband awash in alcohol, a retiree has an epiphany of how she can start over.

By JOE MOZINGO
Times Staff Writer

SHE WORKED on the corporate side of the aerospace industry for 30 years. She intersected and dialogued and facilitated. She drove a Realtor's champagne Cadillac CTS. She raised three sons. She kept her family together as her husband drank himself to death.

Karen McCarthy mulled over her accomplishments as she drove home from her mother's nursing home in Hemet one night last spring. Her mom's mind was evaporating in the final stages of Alzheimer's. Seeing her lose title to her life's narrative brought McCarthy to consider her own.

She pulled onto the 91 Freeway and headed west into the orange city glow. In the hermetic silence of the Cadillac, her mind hurtled through old memories and dreams ahead. She wanted to make an impact beyond work and family.

She had coasted out of her youth, swirling in the eddies past so many opportunities she would jump at now. By the time she took a hard course as an adult she was already hemmed in by the rugged circumstances she had drifted into.

[See Peace Corps, Page A18]



MEL MELCON Los Angeles Times

LOST LOVE: Karen McCarthy holds a photo of her husband, John, taken in 1974. He died in 2003.

Inside Today's Times

Mattel's Bratz award skimpy

The toy maker wins up to \$100 million in a copyright trial, far less than what it sought. **Business, C1**

Baseball replays begin this week

Angels-Rangers game will be among the first to use the reviews. **Sports, D1**

Weather: Morning fog, then sunny. Downtown: 84/68. Page B10

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LAWRENCE K. HO Los Angeles Times

The freshest produce

Gracey Williss, 6, picks her own green beans at Underwood Family Farms in Moorpark. **Food, F1**



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