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Please describe a little bit about your background?

Colia L. Clark is a budding producer for the Manhattan Neighborhood Network. She is a secular Humanist, Pan Africanist, USA Co-Coordinator International Commission of Inquiry on Haiti, US Senate Candidate Green Party, USA Co-Coordinator Guadeloupe Haiti Tour USA, former special Assistant to martyred civil rights leader Medgar W. Evers. Clark is cofounder of the SNCC Black Belt Alabama Voting Rights Campaign, 1963-1965, member of SNCC Mississippi field staff, founder of Mother on the Move Chicago, Coordinator Poor Women Against Vietnam War. Clark has worked as an adjunct lecturer in the college and university system and as an editor for a small Black press. She also has experience as a conflict resolution trainer and folklorist.

In 2011, Clark was presented with the Freedom Flame Award and inducted into Voter Rights Hall of Fame, at Selma, Alabama.

Why are you running? What are your goals in office?

What are the top three issues that you are running on?

## **Reclaiming and Building Public Education**

*Education is a national security issue. An ignorant population cannot protect the nation.*

America's greatest national treasure and resource is her youth. We must protect our national treasure so that it grows wealth as a valued resource for centuries to come. Education is a human right and a national security priority. An illiterate population is a danger to the security of the nation.

Our children's future is not for sale. Reverse the pattern of robbing the public education budget in order to build the Charter School Movement.

*Universal Education for All: Democratizing College Education.* Education for All: A nation which places an undue burden on its young cannot long survive. As Senator, I will work around the clock to push through overdue, appropriate funding for federal mandates, which will create a democratic education for college students.

I am proposing legislation to democratize four years of no-cost college education at CUNY and SUNY Colleges and universities.

No more loans to underwrite a college education. *Immediate Cancellation of all outstanding College Loan Debt*

As Senator, I would propose legislation to pay for education and other domestic needs by cutting the present Defense Budget by fifty percent (50%), placing surtax on war profiteering industries, and ending the no tax option for defense industries. A combination of these

measures -- Defense Department cuts, surtax for defense industries and defense industries paying their fair share of taxes -- will create an annual budget in excess of 500 million dollars of funds for overhauling the education system.

### *Paying for College Education*

I will propose legislation for a USA Homeland Marshall Plan. The USA Marshall Plan, which enabled Europe to provide an excellent education for its citizenry, must be imitated at home in the USA. America's young deserve the best from its government, too.

A share of funds reclaimed from Defense Department and war profiteering industries will be used to pay for college education for the first four years. Students seeking careers in medicine, engineering, agriculture and education will have their education underwritten through terminal degrees.

**I am campaigning under a Freedom Agenda** which includes Economic Bill of Rights, voting rights as constitutional rights, (restore habeas and due process; end indefinite detention, warrantless wiretapping, state secrets, etc.) and education as a constitutional right. As a former Democrat, in fact a Freedom Democrat from the civil rights movement I will vigorously struggle for constitutional legislation in these areas under the Freedom Agenda Platform.

How are you socially progressive and fiscally responsible?

I have spent a life time struggling for human and civil rights, rights of women and other oppressed groups including the environment.

I live on a small social security income making do as best possible.

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What role will grassroots organizing play in your campaign? Grassroots organizing is primary to my campaign which includes grassroots activists and issues.

(If you are running in a New York City district you may skip this question and the next one.)

Have you been endorsed by a DFA Coalition group? (check one) YES NO

ENDORSEMENT PROCESS NOT COMPLETE NO LOCAL DFA GROUP

If yes or the process is not complete, please provide the group's name and contact person.

How will Democracy for NYC's support help your campaign?

The presence of a progressive group of the nature and character of Democracy for New York will help bring extra creditability to a third party campaign like that of Green Party candidates who are often overlooked due to the historic character of the two major parties. There is no

question an endorsement by Democracy for New York will lighten my burden of building a strong senatorial campaign.

I am: (check one) THE CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN MANAGER

OTHER (please specify)

Colia Liddell LaFayette Clark, US Green Party Senate Candidate for New York State

1) What is your position on Occupy Wall Street movement and the Occupation of Zucotti Park?

I strongly support the efforts of the Occupy Wall Street movement and their right to hold general assemblies to accomplish their goals. The occupy forces are standing on solid ground challenging old norms by asserting the constitutional right of the American people to publicly express their dissatisfaction with a failing USA economy controlled by Corporate big business. Occupy Wall Street has succeeded in changing then national debate by focusing in on the gross inequality of the economic system and the control by tiny power elite with the slogans: "Occupy Wall Street" and "the 99% vs the 1%".

It is urgent that all Americans protect the right of Occupy to engage in public debate which opens the discourse on fundamental right to assembly uninterrupted by mayoral authority and police power. Let Zucotti Park become a new school in which political and economic literacies are developed and explored for the sake of the USA. The USA position is as great world power therefore the outcome of Occupy Zucotti will affect the thinking of all humankind. Hands off the Occupy Zucotti Park. Let Zucotti live and thrive.

2) How do you define net Neutrality? Where do you stand on the related proposal or enacted legislation pertaining to this issue? I support net neutrality – the principle that the Internet should be a public space equally accessible to all. We must not allow corporate control of this valuable resource. I support all legislation that will accomplish this. As senator from New York I will fight for government funds that will assure that every American has full access to the Internet because it has the potential of enabling the development of multiple literacies which will enrich and enhance our lives.

3) What is your position on the current federal health care legislation? What do you think the best health care solution for the country and state is and how would you go about enacting and implementing health care legislation?

We need single-payer health care for New York State and the nation, insuring that all residents are able to access the best medical services. The present notion that millions of Americans should be without proper medical care is an example of careless and unconcerned government. The threat to force Americans to purchase health insurance from private insurance companies threatens to destroy the fundamental legal protections laid out in the U.S. Constitution. As U.S. Senator from New York, I will defend the Constitution. Single-payer is the only American insurance of choice.

The national security of any nation is only as strong as the health and literacy of its people. I will fight for a healthy, well-educated America -- strong, independent, and free to grow and thrive.

4) Do you feel that corporations should be legally considered to be people, and that money spent promoting or opposing candidates or issues should be protected as free speech? If you do not, how would you tackle this issue in light of the Supreme Court rulings? If you do, how would you address the implications the court rulings have on campaign finance and the money in politics.

This 'legal fiction' of corporation as people is not new. It emerged in the Slaughter House Cases in the 1870's as first application to US Supreme Court under the new 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to US Constitution. The irony is that the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment which was designed to provide "citizenship", "due process" and "equal protection of the law" to newly freed Africans was used as a launching pad by big business to secure these rights for themselves. Corporations are not people, money is not speech, and only human beings are entitled to rights as specified in the Constitution. I support comprehensive campaign finance reform, including caps on spending and contributions at the national and state level, and full public financing of elections. All viable candidates at the state and federal levels should have free and equal radio and television time and print press coverage.

5) What is your position on the current implementation of Mayoral Control and specifically on reducing the mayor's appointments on the Panel for Educational Policy to a minority status?

I respect the right of State and local representatives to provide oversight for education. Where I can I will work closely with the City Council, educational administrators, parent business and community on the urgent issue of improving the quality of education for all New Yorkers. As senator, I will struggle to increase federal funding for education to the entire State of New York.

However, I must be abundantly clear that I am also a citizen of New York and thereby have the responsibility to fight for the best education possible for New York. In the past, I have worked to assure that parents were empowered to participate fully in the educational development of their children by making sure that parents were equal players in public school educational implementation, from Board of Regents, School Board, Educational administrator to teacher in classroom.

Mayoral control and his appointed PEP has destroyed any semblance of democratic governance for our public schools and despite claims to the contrary, has not resulted in any significant improvement in student performance.

As citizen I hold to the position that access must not be altered or denied. I stand firmly planted on grounds that any element that corrodes the quality of education is unacceptable, including the Corporate Charter School movement. It is urgent that the education of USA children is in the hands of Parents, Board of Regents, School Boards, Principals and Teachers. Anything else undermines the fabric of a quality education.

6) Do you support giving public resources to charter, as opposed to standard public, schools? If so, please explain?

Charter schools should not be funded with public education dollars. I will help to reverse the pattern of robbing the public education budget in order to build the Charter School Movement. Our children's future is not for sale.

The voucher system emerged under shady circumstances. The White Citizens' Council schools of the South were failing because the recession of the 1980s caused a serious employment crisis and millions found themselves without income. Thus, there were no longer excess dollars for private Citizen Council Schools.

On the other hand, black parents with children in newly desegregated schools were upset with the poor quality of public education and wanted the resources to place their children into private schools with the hope for a quality education.

The Reagan Administration responded to this crisis by offering vouchers of up to \$1,000 to aid parents who needed income to keep their children in the all-white Citizens' Council schools. Given an open gate for funds, black parents also applied for vouchers to help underwrite a private school education for their children.

These voucher allotments opened the road for the plans underlying the policy of the Reagan Administration to begin the downsizing of public education. The Reagan policy is best expressed by one of his educational advisers commenting on the financing of higher education: "We are in danger of producing an educated proletariat. That's dynamite. We have to be selective on who we allow to go through higher education." The spirit of this comment is reflected in government funding of the Charter School Movement which places a quality education for all Americans at risk, with no access.

7) What would you do as a representative to address safety issues at Indian Point?

Indian Point is a danger threat to New York and surrounding areas. Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant sits on not one but two earthquake fault lines. There have been accidents at the plant. More importantly the plant was designed for a forty year life span. We must not risk leakage to New York's precious water system. Further, there is no workable evacuation plan in place and even if it were the chance of the 20 million inhabitants in the 50 mile range of Indian Point to escape a major disaster is unlikely without serious bodily harm to many millions.

Besides the problem of Indian Pt., nuclear energy is just too dangerous. We cannot have another Fukushima. We must follow the example of other countries like Germany and phase out all nuclear power plants.

As senator from New York State, I will lobby the Congress, New York State and City legislators for an immediate close of Indian Point because there is no real point in keeping this dangerous threat to 20 million Americans open. Indian Point must be closed. Those qualified workers at the plant should be part of a work force along with qualified scientist, engineers and administrators whose job is to clean up this nuclear disaster.

I will lobby for the funds to employ the present and future work force in the counties surrounding Indian Point to be employed in Green Jobs with comparable incomes, union protection. These men and women deserve a secure work place. No more cutting off the limb on which we sit. I am for a safe, healthy green New York for today and tomorrow. Our children deserve it.

8) Are you for or against a woman's right to choose? Does your opinion on this vary based on the circumstances? Please be specific.

A woman's body is her temple. Women's right to control their bodies is nonnegotiable. It is essential that the option of a safe, legal abortion remains available. The "morning-after" pill must be affordable and easily accessible without a prescription, together with a government-sponsored public relations campaign to educate women about forms of contraception.

Women's rights must be protected and expanded to guarantee each woman's right as a full participant in society, free from sexual harassment, job discrimination, or interference in the intensely personal choice about whether to have a child. It's high time that America demands that those State that have not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment do so. Further, America must end its role as one of the very few nations that has not signed the Women Rights under the United Nations Charter. I will work with any and all women and supporters to assure that the Rights Amendment is ratified by US Senate, though shamefully late. Further, I will join forces with those in the Congress, women's groups and their supporters to assure that the United States of America is in accord with UN Declaration of Human Rights by forcing our US Senate to ratify Women Right under the UN Charter.

9) What is your position on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan? What specific actions and timelines do you feel the US should take to withdraw or maintain troops in these countries?

The end to all foreign wars is urgent. Especially, I will push legislation to end this illegal war on the Iraqi and Afghan people and environment. I will work night and day, day and night, to push through legislation to end funding for foreign wars. The billions of dollars spent in mass murder and devastation of other nations and the planet are instead desperately needed to rebuild New York State and America's infrastructure, to underwrite a mass transit system, upgrade public schools, cover the cost of single payer health care, underwrite failing hospitals and clinics, and to provide housing for all of America's citizens.

10) What is your position on the millionaires tax? What specific tax reform, if any, do you feel should be made?

Federal and state taxes must be strongly progressive. We can afford to cut taxes for most people if we make corporations and the superrich pay their fair share. Then we can cut them even more when we halt our nation's wasteful spending on wars, weaponry and militarism. I call for progressive taxation, shifting tax from individuals to corporations, taxing "bads" not "goods," taxing unearned income at the same rate as earned income, taxing speculation on Wall Street, and cutting corporate tax giveaways. The more than 800 billion dollars doled out to Wall Street is not acceptable. New York State could use her

share of that money to cover the state budget deficit, school administration, development, and small business development for a fiscally ailing New York.

11) Do you think that hydraulic fracturing should be allowed in New York State and why? In the U.S. and why? If so, under what conditions?

Hydro-fracking should not be allowed anywhere in the US or on the planet. There is plenty of evidence that hydro-fracking contaminates underground aquifers as well as the air, water and vegetation above ground. There is no justifiable explanation for this kind of reckless injury to planet earth in the name of a quest for energy. We have available sun, wind, water and other nontoxic, cheap to produce and safe to deliver sources of energy. Let us rise up and take hold of these.

12) Do you think that there should be a death penalty in New York State? Should the death penalty be abolished in the U.S.?

The death penalty must be abolished. There is no evidence that the death penalty has improved or decreased violent crimes in the U.S. An "eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth leaves us all blind and unable to eat." We must seek alternatives and rehabilitation.

13. How do you define responsible development and what are some New York development projects that fit your definition.

I define responsible development as that which is needed to improve the quality of life. Secondly, such development must be environmentally safe and readily producible. Third, the development must be people friendly and fit easily into the culture of the city. Fourth, the development must have reasonable cost with readily achievable guidelines.

The Second Avenue Subway system is an example of responsible development.

Responsible development must be beneficial to the environment and social fabric. Bloomberg's plan to add one million more people to NYC through tax breaks and zoning changes for the developers of high rise luxury housing and mega sports complexes without regard to the environment or the multi-ethnic and economic character of existing neighborhoods is an example of irresponsible development.

When I walk about the City, I am pleased at the many small community flower and shrub gardens that mark the landscape. These are examples of responsible development. They please the eye as well as the mind, body and spirit.

