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**SANDERS AND PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS FIRST TO BEGIN CHARTING AN  
ALTERNATIVE TO GOP'S CONTRACT WITH AMERICA**

Congressman Bernard Sanders (I-Vermont) and seven other members of the 30-member Progressive Caucus of the U.S. Congress held a standing-room only press conference to outline their ambitious plans to offer a comprehensive legislative alternative to the Republican Contract with America. The press conference was covered in its entirety by C-SPAN, the national public affairs television network.

The first bill to be introduced is a major "jobs bill" to create at least one million new jobs in America in each of the next two years -- THE JOB CREATION AND INVEST IN AMERICA ACT OF 1995.

"At a time when the widening gap between rich and low and middle-income Americans is larger than any time since the 1930s," Sanders stressed, "at a time when poverty is increasing, 22% of our children are impoverished and 5 million children go hungry every day, the Republican Contract will lower taxes for wealthiest Americans and decimate the safety net desperately needed by our poor, elderly, and children."

"Now that the Cold War is over and the Russians want to join NATO and the Chinese receive most-favored-nation status and billions of dollars of new U.S. corporate investment, Speaker Gingrich and his Republican supporters want to increase military spending and take it from our most vulnerable citizens," Sanders noted. "The Progressive Caucus is going to fight tooth and nail against cuts in food stamps, school lunch programs, child care, affordable housing, and help for the blind and disabled."

Several additional members of Congress from different regions of the nation, who personify the diversity of the Progressive Caucus, spoke in strong support of the jobs bill and announced their intention "to wage guerilla warfare, if need be" to challenge the plans of the new Republican leadership of the 104th Congress.

"Welfare reform in the 104th Congress," Sanders stressed, "should begin with corporate welfare. Since the 1950s the effective tax rate on U.S. corporations has been cut in half. If these corporations paid the same tax rates in 1995 as they did in the 1950s, there would be an additional \$250 billion in the U.S. Treasury with which to pay down the deficit and make these targeted investments for a stronger, more equitable national economy."

Sanders is a member of the House Banking and Financial Services Committee and the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee. He is also Chairman of the House Progressive Caucus.

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