



VOLUME 2, ISSUE 10



OCTOBER 1997

Why the fast track is the wrong track

America needs fair trade, not fast-track trade deals that don't allow input from Congress. With fast-track authority, the president negotiates trade agreements that Congress isn't allowed to amend. That means the only vehicle for giving American workers and consumers a voice in the process is eliminated. And that's why fast-track trade deals lack the rules and standards we need to protect our jobs, our wages, our environment and our safety.

The "fast track" brought us NAFTA—and look where that got us. The fast-track NAFTA deal with Mexico and Canada in 1993 is a perfect example of what happens when we rush into agreements that don't take into consideration the concerns of workers and consumers. Since the NAFTA deal was struck:

(continued on p. 3)

"This was an act of racist terrorism"

Malcolm Boyd, an African-American university student, was brutally beaten by racists on August 23 near Fresno State. At press time he had been transferred to a hospital in Los Angeles to be close to his family. His white "alleged" attacker—the one who wielded the pipe—has plead innocent and awaits trial. The following comments are from two activists very involved in the local effort to deal with this atrocity.

(The headline above, "This was an act of racist terrorism," is from a comment made by Dr. Kehinde Solwazi, Fresno City College instructor. Solwazi indicated that anger in the African-American community over this incident is acute, and that there may be a significant statewide response. We hope to continue to cover this story over the coming months, with his help.)

(continued on p. 6)

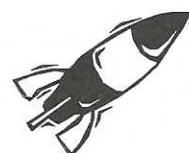
Plutonium poses grave danger

by Larry Langford

If all goes according to plan, on October 6 the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will launch a probe on a seven-year mission to Saturn to explore the planet's surface, rings and several of its moons. The Cassini Space Probe, scheduled to reach Saturn in 2004, is the next mission in NASA's ongoing program to explore the solar system using unmanned vehicles. The Cassini is two stories tall and weighs about six tons, making it the largest interplanetary spacecraft ever built.

Although the craft will carry nearly seven thousand pounds of fuel, it will still need to use the gravitational fields of Earth and Venus in order to help it gain enough momentum to reach its destination. The gravitational pull of these two planets will act much like a slingshot to throw the probe into deep space. Only after two flybys of Venus, and one of Earth, will the Cassini have attained the necessary velocity to actually begin its flight to Saturn, a journey that will total over two billion miles, over ninety-nine percent of which will be an unpowered coast.

So what's the problem? According to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the mission poses a potentially grave health hazard to the entire world. The Cassini will use solid launch it into space, the probe itself will use plutonium-238, an isotope that found in nuclear waste. WILPF fears that if there is an explosion during takeoff, or if the probe crashes into Earth on its flyby, this plutonium could be dispersed into the atmosphere and cause an environmental catastrophe that could potentially affect nearly two-thirds of the world's population.



(continued on p. 3)

The purpose

*of Labor/Community Alliance
is to strengthen and unite the
labor movement and the progressive
community in the Central San Joaquin
Valley through information sharing.
This publication is printed monthly and
includes a calendar of events. In addition
to providing the basis for mutual support
between labor and community groups,
this newsletter will be used to promote
dialog on the subject of creating an
independent political party for the
U.S. working class.*

Project Coordinators

John Veen Pam Whalen
Mike Rhodes Del Berg

**Labor Party
Frank Little Chapter
P.O. Box 5077**

Fresno, CA 93755

(209)226-2078

Fax c/o Pam Whalen:

277-6709

E-mail: clr2@igc.apc.org

Newsletter marks first anniversary

This issue marks the one-year anniversary of publishing this newsletter. The *Labor/Community Alliance* newsletter started out as 200 copies printed on the copy machine at a local union office by members of the Labor Party in Fresno. The goal was to link labor and community groups to work together on projects of mutual interest. Being a part of the Labor Party, this newsletter has also sought to provide an alternative to politics as usual in Fresno. Our slogan, "The bosses have two parties: We need one of our Own!" speaks to the need to have a political party that puts working people's interests at the top of the political agenda.

Taking a stand in support of the Labor Party has been a mixed blessing. While many people see the need to have an alternative to the Democrats and Republicans, many of our allies want to work within the two-party system and make it more responsive to working-class interests. The Frank Little Chapter of the Labor Party does not see this as a contradiction. There is room for both viewpoints within this organization. We are working to build a base of labor and community groups to challenge the corporate and ruling class agenda represented by the two-party system. This newsletter is one of our primary vehicles for linking labor and community groups.

Our goal for the next year is to continue expanding this newsletter. We are now printing 1,500 copies a month at a union print shop and would like to double that in a year. We would like to eventually become *the* labor newspaper in the area, reaching every union member in Fresno County. Union members in this community will once again have a publication that represents their interests. Information about organizing campaigns, strikes, boycotts and other areas of interest will be shared in these pages.

What is unique about this paper is that it is more than a union publication. We believe that in order for unions to survive and grow they need community support. Community groups will benefit by a closer connection to

organized labor. Evidence of this can be seen in the struggles around welfare reform and immigration issues where labor and community activists are working together on joint projects. The strawberry workers' march in Watsonville brought together a powerful coalition in support of justice and human rights for farmworkers.

International labor rights is another area where labor and community groups will find unity. As corporations close factories here, throwing union members out of work, they are opening sweatshops in Mexico, Haiti and Indonesia. Community activists are appalled at Disney and Nike paying 30¢/hour starvation wages, and union groups see this as a threat to all working people. These are issues that will unite labor and community groups, and these are some of the issues you will hear more about in the coming year.

We hope you find the *Labor /Community Alliance* newsletter useful and informative. We are excited by the challenges of this work and the opportunities ahead.

~ Mike Rhodes

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Fast track, cont.

① America lost 420,000 jobs as corporations shifted production to Mexico, where wages average about \$4 a day. According to a *Wall Street Journal* poll in 1992, 40 percent of corporate executives admitted they were likely to shift production to Mexico because of NAFTA.

② Employers are using the threat of plant closures to drive wages down. People who found new employment after their jobs moved to Mexico took an average annual pay cut of \$4,400. And a Cornell University study shows that since NAFTA, employers have tripled the rate at which they shut down production to avoid union organizing.

③ Air and water pollution along the U.S.-Mexico border have become significantly worse. The amount of hazardous waste crossing the border increased 30 percent in 1995, and hepatitis A cases in border communities have risen to two to five times the national average.

④ Increased agricultural imports and inadequate border inspections have led to an increase in unsafe food in American supermarkets and unsafe trucks on our nation's highways.

Fast-track trade gives corporations too much power. Trade deals are supposed to benefit everyone—including workers and consumers in all countries involved. They're supposed to be about trading goods, not exporting jobs.



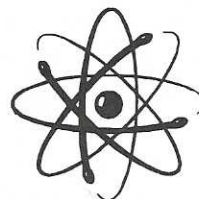
When you move too fast, you make mistakes. America has negotiated hundreds of successful trade agreements without fast-track authority. Given NAFTA's failure, why rush into more fast-track trade deals? Better the right track than the fast track. **Stop fast track!** Send a message to Congress today: America's trade should work for everyone. Go slow and get it right.

Sen. Barbara Boxer	112 Hart Bldg., Washington, DC 20510 (202)224-3553
Sen. Dianne Feinstein	331 Hart Bldg., Washington, DC 20510 (202)224-3841
Rep. Gary Condit (18th District)	1123 Longworth Bldg., Washington, DC 20515 (202)225-6131
Rep. George Radanovich (19th District)	313 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20515 (202)225-4540
Rep. Cal Dooley (20th District)	1227 Longworth Bldg., Washington, DC 20515 (202)225-3341
Rep. Bill Thomas (21st District)	2209 Rayburn Bldg., Washington, DC 20515 (202)225-2915

Plutonium danger, cont.

Opposition to the Cassini mission is part of WILPF's larger campaign for nuclear disarmament. Along with a number of other groups, it is participating in the Abolition 2000 Network, a global effort that seeks to eliminate all nuclear weapons by the turn of the century. Although the Cassini project is not in itself a military mission, WILPF regards the Saturn probe as yet another step in the nuclear industry's attempts to open new markets in space, which will in turn lead to the further militarization of space travel and planetary exploration. WILPF wants NASA to use another energy source for the Cassini mission, such as the solar-powered units it used on the Mars Observer and Mariner missions.

But safety is the primary concern about this particular mission. Nuclear power sources have long been used by both the American and Russian space programs, including Apollo, Viking and to WILPF, there on three out of 24 six out of 39 Russian nuclear materials.



Russian space programs such as missions as Voyager. According to have been accidents U.S. missions, and Russian missions, using

The worst such accident occurred on Nov. 17, 1996, when a Russian Mars probe carrying plutonium came down over populated areas of Chile and Bolivia. Even though disaster was averted, WILPF fears that next time we may not be so lucky.

NASA maintains that it has taken every precaution to ensure the safety of the mission. It calculates that the chances the spacecraft would hit the Earth on its flyby are less than one in a million, and says a crash would only occur after an unlikely series of events that led to a widespread systems failure that altered the craft's trajectory. Even if such an accident did happen, says NASA, people would be affected by the plutonium, which is in a ceramic form, only if they directly inhaled one of the particles. As to alternative energy sources, NASA says that current solar energy technology would be inadequate for this mission. Even the new high-efficiency solar cells used by the European Space Agency would make the Cassini too massive for its mission to Saturn.

WILPF disagrees with such official reassurances and charges NASA with seriously underestimating the potential danger Cassini poses to the world. According to WILPF, some scientists estimate that as many as 30 million deaths from cancer could be caused by a re-entry accident, not to mention increased incidences of birth defects. It is thought that one pound of plutonium-238, if distributed evenly throughout the earth, could cause lung cancer in every individual.

A WILPF Cancel Cassini Hotline has been established for those wishing to send a telegram to President Clinton to ask him to stop the Cassini. The number is 1-800-651-1462; it will cost \$7.25 for the hand-delivered telegram. Rallies and vigils are planned at the White House, the United Nations and at Cape Canaveral, the launch site. If necessary, non-violent direct action is planned to stop the launch. For more information, contact the local WILPF chapter at 229-9661.

City Beat

by
Gene
Zimmerman



City employees settle 3-year contract; employees will receive 9 percent wage package, and health and welfare costs have been met. Third and fourth from right: Gene Zimmerman, FCEA Business Agent, and Kari Alverson, FCEA President.

The recent UPS strike raised issues that Fresno City labor unions have attempted to resolve for the past several years: the exploitation of temporary employees, and contracting out bargaining unit work!

Recently, the Fresno City Employees Association raised these issues during bargaining talks with the city by *submitting* proposals that would require management to track positions where temporary employees were used and limit the employer from violating the city charter. All proposals were flatly rejected by the city administration, leaving the union only two options: filing legal action or seeking a City Council resolution directing the administration to follow the law.

During August, some 300 temporary employees, most of whom work in the city parks and playgrounds, were paid full-time wages while the union's permanent part-time employees were paid part-time wages. None of the union's recreation leaders were offered full-time employment during the summer months while full-time work went to temporary employees. By exploiting the temporary workers, the city saves approximately 35 percent in wages and benefits. No city retirement or health plans are offered to these temps.

Each year the Fresno Parks and Recreation Department is hit with budget cuts, and the department justifies hiring temporary workers due to lack of resources. Higher-paid police officers are required to patrol the parks because the department cannot place full-time recreation leaders at various sites.

This year's Parks and Recreation Department budget includes a \$1 million contribution to the County of Fresno to help fund a juvenile boot camp. Rather than place this money in a parks and recreation budget for city youth, the City Council moves the money to the county to put kids in jail. Any thinking law enforcement expert will tell the public that the recidivism rate of youths returning to crime after spending time in a boot camp is 85 percent or higher. Even *The Fresno Bee*, in a recent editorial, admitted this. Maybe this is the "Fresno Factor" Jim Wasserman writes about in his column. Maybe one *can* fool most of the people most of the time!

Global sweatshop curriculum available

An exciting new resource is available from Campaign for Labor Rights, an organization that works exclusively on sweatshop issues. The global sweatshop curriculum packet contains more than 60 pages of useful information, including:

- ✓ 3 classroom exercises (with the necessary materials)
- ✓ an inspiring report on teaching sweatshop issues in the classroom
- ✓ profiles of young activists
- ✓ practical suggestions for student action
- ✓ suggestions for concerned shoppers
- ✓ profiles of 2 child labor campaigns and 3 sweatshop campaigns
- ✓ a copy of the anti-sweatshop resolution passed by an Ohio city council
- ✓ Campaign for Labor Rights newsletter, with updates on campaigns profiled in the packet

There is nothing else like this available. The sweatshop curriculum packet is campaign-oriented. It presents a highly abstract concept—global economics—in concrete terms.



Throughout the packet, issues are framed with reference to two specific campaigns dealing with child labor (Foul Ball and Rugmark) and three specific campaigns dealing with sweatshop practices (Nike, Disney, Guess). The packet discusses sweatshop issues both at home and overseas.

For use in classrooms for 4th through 12th grade students, the material is not divided by grade levels. Instead, teachers are invited to select and adapt as appropriate for their students. The packet uses classroom language.

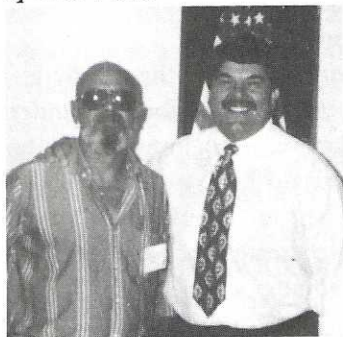
Send check or money order for \$12.50 to Campaign for Labor Rights, 1247 E Street SE, Washington, DC 20003.

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AFL-CIO moves forward

by Fred Fuchs



Fred Fuchs with Richard Trumka, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer, at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, July 1997, during Congressional District Coordinator Training.

In 1995, a new leadership was elected to head the AFL-CIO. Many people thought that the changes proposed by John Sweeney, Richard Trumka and Linda Chavez-Thompson were going to be limited to rhetoric. But something happened. The changes in the AFL-CIO have shown themselves to be more than cosmetic. A new leadership has taken charge and is charting a new course. They are working

to reverse labor's decline by reconstructing a labor movement that:

- organizes workers into unions,
- builds a strong political voice for workers in our nation,
- provides a new voice to workers in a changing economy, and
- creates a new voice for workers in our communities.

This new leadership is willing to take risks and go into uncharted territory to address the crisis facing labor. The Issues Mobilization project is one tool that is central to achieving the union's objectives, whether organizing, legislative/political, or bargaining. By projecting an alternative vision — a worker's perspective — on the political economy, labor will equip its members with the tools to analyze economic issues and the self-confidence to do so.

What are we doing?

- mobilizing working families to lobby their members of congress on key issues and hold them accountable for their actions
- providing education and skills training to rank-and-file activists in the area's legislative issues, economic conditions facing workers and mobilization techniques
- building an ongoing and expanding union activist and community activist network to strengthen working families' ability to mobilize for legislative and political action

Why are we doing this?

- Working families are not sharing in the country's economic gains.
- Real wages have been declining.
- Family income has remained essentially the same since 1975.
- Employers continue to cut health benefits.
- Fewer workers get guaranteed pensions.

Elected officials (members of Congress) are casting votes on important legislation that affects every working family.

Politicians, regardless of political party, must continually be reminded of where we stand on the issues and encouraged to do the right thing.

How are we going to do this?

- inform and educate our members about issues facing us
- provide education and skills training to rank-and-file activists
- help our members become more aware of their representatives' records
- establish working relationships with coalitions and labor allies to broaden our reach to communities
- regularly communicate with union members through worksite and community leaflets

Please watch for information on the next activist workshop to be held in October. This will be an all-day event covering common sense economics for American working families, effective National Issues Mobilization and recruitment and organizing of volunteers. For more information, call 872-1917 and leave your name and how we can reach you.

Campaign for Human Development

The Campaign for Human Development (CHD), a Catholic organization, may be an important force for social justice in the Valley soon—an opinion based on the great turnout at their conference September 13 at Catholic Charities in Fresno. Rollie Smith, director of Catholic Charities for the Central Valley, was the primary organizer of the conference: "The Church, the Valley, and Economic Justice."

The 50 or more people attending included activists associated with the Jesuit volunteers, the Black Catholic Congress, the Coalition for Peace and Justice, the Latino Civil Rights Network and many other groups.

All participants were already active in various causes, which proves that if you want to get something done, give the job to a busy person. The materials and the structure of the conference were first-rate.

CHD is the U.S. Catholic Bishops' 27-year-old anti-poverty initiative. Many of the statements in the workshop packets were right on the money (so to speak). For example, this sampling from the Bishops' pastoral letter on economics, "Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy:"

- ✚ The economy exists for the person, not the person for the economy.
- ✚ All economic life should be shaped by moral principles. Economic choices and institutions must be judged by how they protect or undermine the life and dignity of the human person, support the family, and serve the common good.
- ✚ A fundamental moral measure of any economy is how the poor and vulnerable are faring.

Beating, cont.

Dewayne Thomas:

"I see this as a life and death situation. When they came out and hit Malcolm Boyd in the head, they hit me and all other blacks in the head. This is worse than the Rodney King incident. We've got to pull people together and say, we're going to be heard. California is the No. 1 hate crime state. Seventy-two percent of all the hate crimes in the nation occur here. Some people see the hate crimes, and some people don't. Many people think this is an isolated incident. Those that see these crimes too often keep it to themselves.

"There are a lot of Peckerwood members [the white racist gang Boyd's attacker belongs to] and other hate group members in Fresno and at Fresno State. That's a fact even though President Welty wrote a statement saying this was an isolated incident. He even sent out students to put the word out that there are no hate crimes at Fresno State. But we pulled the files and found out that's not accurate.

"A week after the Malcolm Boyd incident, a woman was confronted on campus by a group of white males. She was on her way to pick up her daughter. They called her every racist word for 'black' they could think of, and they said they were going to rape her. It's not just an African-American thing, but people aren't responding fast enough, not fast enough for me. As far as people getting involved, white people tend to look at it like this: 'I wouldn't have done it.' They put money in the jar and that's it, *their* conscience is clear.

"Black people feel like, 'It wouldn't have happened to me. I would have been ready.' Then they put their money in the jar, they wipe their hands, and their conscience is clear. The way I see it, *it could have been me*. This fight, this struggle, this battle is more than white versus black, it's much bigger than groups, organizations, fraternities. This is a fight between God and the devil. Either we come down on God's side, or we're trapped . . ."

Dewayne Thomas, along with Stephanie Millikin, Kassandre Clayton and others are organizing a group with Boyd's name as the acronym: Building On Yesterday's Dream. Call 278-7842 for more information.

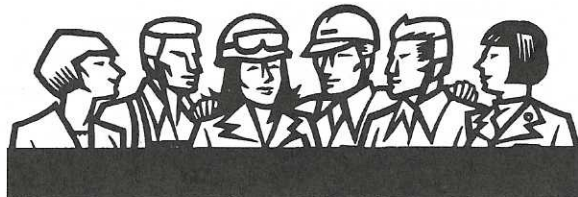
Su Kapoor:

On August 23, Malcolm Boyd, a young African-American student at Fresno State, became the victim of hate violence. He was brutally assaulted with a lead pipe by another young man, Jerry Joseph Hamilton, a documented member of a white supremacist gang. Hamilton is neither a student at Fresno State nor connected with the Kappa Sigma fraternity near whose house the incident occurred. Based on their investigation, Fresno police have labeled the assault a racially motivated hate crime. The Fresno County District Attorney has decided to prosecute Hamilton.

This incident is a rude awakening for all who live in Fresno, particularly those who are closely connected with

Fresno State. It has shattered the dreams of a young man and the hopes of his parents and friends. It has shaken the faith of other students. It has jolted the faculty and administrators and raised several questions in our minds.

While medical treatment and prayers for the speedy recovery of Malcolm Boyd are being offered, efforts are under way on the part of students, faculty and administration to address issues of diversity, racism and hate violence on the campus in a coordinated way. Several meetings are being planned to work with students to create a safe and peaceful environment for everyone on campus.



Jobs with Justice calls for welfare/workfare action day

Jobs with Justice, a national coalition of labor and community groups, is calling for a day of action on welfare/workfare on December 10, International Human Rights Day. The action will highlight community outrage at attacks on the poor embodied in national and state welfare "reform" laws and the threat workfare poses to all workers—both those in the program and those they will replace.

The action will support efforts to organize workfare workers and fight privatization of welfare services, currently being bid on by companies like Lockheed-Martin and EDS. Actions will be organized locally and will reflect targets and issues being addressed by local coalitions. Jobs with Justice hopes this will be the beginning of a longer-term strategic alliance between labor and welfare rights activists and recipients and help bridge the divisions fostered by the right on this issue. The three main unions representing state and city employees being privatized and replaced—AFSCME, SEIU and CWA—are pledging support, and AFL-CIO endorsement is expected.

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Organize the unorganized!

An interview with Yolanda Guerra

by Mike Rhodes

Yolanda Guerra is an organizer for SEIU Local 535 who is assigned to Fresno to organize workers in the social services and healthcare industries.

MR: What was SEIU's goal in bringing you to Fresno?

YG: The main goal is to get some campaigns going and target places where people are not represented by a union. I am really excited about being here. I grew up in the Valley and really want to shake Fresno up! I want to help people to get mobilized. I have met a lot of "silent activists" from Fresno. A lot of people came out during the strike and I want to direct that energy to mobilize the community.

MR: How did you become a labor activist?

YG: I grew up in Hanford and worked in the fields and was exposed to all of the conditions that are still prevalent with farmworkers. I really didn't understand what was happening at the time, but I remember losing our jobs after union organizers came to talk to us. The owner saw us talking, and the next day someone else was picking our row. Later, my dad joined the Teamsters union and he got better wages and benefits. In college I got involved with the UFW and many community issues. While working at the welfare department I started really getting involved with the union. It was something that I just had to do. Now that I have this job, it's not like a job. I feel very emotional being back in Fresno and the Valley.

MR: What do you need people to do to help you to organize them?

YG: I want people to think organizing. When they hear someone talking about how they are being mistreated at work, write down their name and phone number and give it to me or the SEIU office (277-6700). I need people to talk to me and teach me and work with me.

MR: What sectors or industry are you targeting?




YG: We are looking at the public sector, non-profit service-oriented—for example, the Central Valley Regional Center, clinics and hospitals.

YARD SALE AND RAFFLE

Oct. 4, 8 A.M.—3 P.M.

Fresno Center for Nonviolence

Drawing at noon for:

-  hand-crafted birdhouse
-  Margaret Hudson birdbath
-  2-month supply organic produce

Raffle tickets \$1 each or 6 for \$5

If you have items to donate for the sale, please bring them to the Center on Friday, October 3 after 1 p.m. or call Angela Price for pickup at 435-6383 before that date. Proceeds benefit FCNV.

Joint Resolution supports jobs bill

Good news! The state Assembly and Senate have both approved a Joint Resolution in support of the (federal) Martinez Jobs Bill (HR-950). From the *Legislative Counsel's Digest*:

"This measure would affirm the Legislature's endorsement of the federal Job Creation and Infrastructure Restoration Act of 1997, including the Jobs 2000 Act of 1997, and would urge the United States Congress to pass the act at once, to meet the urgent demands of the welfare, job, and infrastructure crisis across the nation." The resolution reads in part:

WHEREAS, On March 5, 1997, Congressman Matthew Martinez of California introduced House Resolution 950, the "Job Creation and Infrastructure Restoration Act of 1997," which includes the "Jobs 2000 Act of 1997," to provide \$50 billion per year for emergency public works jobs over a five-year period; and

WHEREAS, The funds will include emergency financial grants to local governments for the construction, repair, and renovation of public works projects including schools, housing, hospitals, parks, bridges, highways, environmental improvement, and other similar projects; and

WHEREAS, The act contains strong labor provisions, including Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements, which ensure living wage jobs, equal opportunity employment, provisions for job safety and a healthful work environment, and union apprenticeship for young workers, with project labor agreements with building trades unions; and

WHEREAS, The destruction of the welfare safety net has created an urgent survival need for a vast number of jobs at a living wage in numerous states across the country, including California, where close to half a million families are in danger of losing welfare benefits with an insufficient number of good paying jobs to meet the demand; and

WHEREAS, The new federal welfare legislation has resulted in workfare, and other low-wage, dead-end job solutions that are being used to replace union workers in the private and public sectors with less skilled workers who are particularly threatened by the loss of protections that were contained in the former welfare law; and

WHEREAS, This situation will decrease the wages and worsen the working conditions of all workers, when what should be created are jobs that pay workers enough to raise a family and lift them out of poverty, as is provided for in the Job Creation and Infrastructure Restoration Act and the Jobs 2000 Act of 1997, which will provide public works jobs at a living wage, on an emergency basis to hundreds of thousands of workers, with priority being given to welfare recipients, the long-term unemployed, victims of plant and base closures, youths, and unemployed building trades workers.

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

Labor/Community Alliance
Labor Party (Frank Little Chapter)
P.O. Box 5077
Fresno, CA 93755

• Address Correction Requested •

Stop! Don't Sign! Two anti-union initiatives in circulation for ballot

Two anti-union initiatives are currently in circulation for qualification for the statewide ballot. If these initiatives receive enough signatures, they will appear on the ballot in the next statewide election. The California School Employees Association strongly urges members and the public to be aware of these initiative petitions and **do not sign them.**

First initiative backed by voucher supporters

The first initiative is sponsored by the same people who drafted and qualified Proposition 174, the school voucher initiative. Their goal is to gut the political action funds of associations like CSEA and CTA, so they can introduce and pass any initiative attacking workers, unions and education.

The initiative would impose onerous requirements on all unions, severely restricting their ability to raise and spend money to pass or defeat initiatives, and/or support or oppose school bonds, local ballot measures or candidates for state or local office. By wiping out union political action funds, the

sponsors tilt the playing field unfairly in their favor. The initiative is being falsely sold by petition circulators as limiting campaign contributions by foreign entities and giving union members more rights.



If they are successful with this initiative, their next step will be to introduce initiatives to create private voucher schools, attack and raid public employees' retirement funds, abolish overtime for the 8-hour workday, or otherwise attack working men and women.

The formal title of this initiative is: POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS. EMPLOYERS. LABOR UNIONS. FOREIGN ENTITIES. INITIATIVE STATUTE.

Second initiative attacks all union dues

The second initiative attempts to totally dry up union funds by eliminating automatic dues deductions and abolishing agency shops. This

initiative would result in wiping out over 50 percent of the funds used for negotiating contracts, grievances and arbitrations, legal appeals, political action, and otherwise staffing unions and representing workers.

The formal title of this initiative is: PUBLIC EMPLOYEE UNIONS: REPRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROHIBITED AGREEMENTS. INITIATIVE STATUTE.
~ (CSEA)

Calendar of Events October 1997

Wednesday, October 1

Garlanding Ceremony for Gandhi's Birthday, Noon, CSUF Peace Garden (north of library). Call 278-2013.

Thursday, October 2

Candlelight Vigil for Gandhi's Birthday, 8 P.M., CSUF Peace Garden. Call 278-2013 for details.

Saturday, October 4

Day of Conscience (end child labor, sweatshop abuses).

Fresno Center for Nonviolence Yard Sale, 8 A.M. to 3 P.M., at the center. Call 227-2133 with questions.

Chowchilla Women's Prison Protest, Noon, at the prison, regarding proper medical care for inmates.

Monday, October 6

Planned launch of Cassini Space Probe. See article on p. 1 for details and action recommendations.

Saturday, October 11

Fresno Center for Nonviolence Board Meeting, 9:30 A.M., 985 N. Van Ness. Guests welcome.

Tuesday, October 14

Monthly Potluck and Discussion Group, 6:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Meets every second Tuesday to discuss personal commitment to nonviolence. Meal at 6:30; discussion at 7:30. Call 237-3225.

Wednesday, October 15

Day of Non-Action: National Huelga Committee urges people not to send their children to school and not to work, to show that people are united in stopping discrimination against immigrants. Contact Mike Medrano at 227-2810, or brownberets@mail.serve.com.

Deadline for submission of information for November issue of *Labor/Community Alliance*. Call 226-2078.

Thursday, October 16

Death Penalty Focus, 7:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N. Van Ness. Call 323-4871.

Saturday, October 18

International Solidarity Day in Support of Nike Workers

Day of Action in Support of the Martinez Jobs Bill

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 10 A.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Call 229-9661.

HIV Substance Abuse Support Group, 2-4 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Call 485-3667.

Amnesty International Fund-Raiser, 5-7:30 P.M., at the Renzi home, 4227 N. Wilson. Call 485-1612.

Critical Mass Bike Rally, 5 P.M., Fresno City College, grassy area off Van Ness. Every third Saturday.

October 18-26

World Rainforest Week (11th annual); call (415)398-4404.

Monday, October 20

Amnesty International, 7:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N. Van Ness. Call 224-0924.

Tuesday, October 21

Health Care for All, 7:15 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Single payer health care advocacy group.

October 24-26

Sowing Seeds for Change, CSUF Symposium for students, farmworkers and farmworker advocates sponsored by Student Action with Farmworkers. Cost of \$35 (by Oct. 6) includes meals and materials. Conference begins with dinner and keynote speaker Friday evening, concludes Sunday morning. Call 441-7131 for details.

Monday, October 27

Labor Party, Frank Little Chapter, 5:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Everyone welcome. Call 226-2078.

Thursday, October 30

Citizens Committee on Police-Community Relations, 7 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Organizational meeting for group to study police-community relations in Fresno. Call 448-8691 for details.

Ongoing Activities/Events

Scalzo Talk, Mon & Thurs 6-9 P.M., KAT 103.1-FM.

Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) Exhibit, Noon to 5 P.M. Tuesday-Sunday at Arte Americas, Van Ness & Calaveras, through Nov. 9. Call 266-2623 for details.

Weekly

Monday-Friday: The Living Room, support and referral resource center for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Noon to 5 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N. Van Ness. Call 485-3667.

Every Saturday: Food Not Bombs feeds the hungry; 1-2 P.M. near the Olive Avenue entrance to Roeding Park. **Needed: volunteers to help cook food Saturday mornings**, 9:30, Sierra Vista United Methodist church, corner of Maple & Illinois.

Upcoming Events

Friday, November 14

Fresno Free College Foundation annual dinner with David Harris.

This Month in History

October 12, 1492: Native Americans discover Columbus.

Greed. Union bashing. Racism. Sexism. Violence. Money politics. Consumerism.

Sick of it? Want to do something about it--here in the Valley?

☒ **YES!** Send me **Labor/Community Alliance** every month.

☐ Yearly rate (circle one): \$35 or \$20 regular, \$10 low income.

☐ Hardship? Contact us. We'll arrange something!

☐ Sustaining: \$10 *per month* (this is our core and our foundation).

☐ **YES!** I will help distribute LCA. Send me a bundle.

☐ **YES!** I want to be put on the "Volunteers for Justice/Emergency Response Network" contact list. Alert me when there's a picket line, street action, phone bank (etc.) for labor rights and social justice.



Name _____ Union/Organization _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____ Ph#, Home: _____ Work _____
Fax _____ E-mail _____

Mail this form to: **Labor/Community Alliance, c/o Labor Party (Frank Little Chapter)**
PO Box 5077, Fresno, CA, 93755. Phone: 226-2078

"...a reborn labor movement must be absolutely committed to racial and gender equality [with] a real commitment to an end to women's 'double day,' real opposition to racism and sexism within unions, relentless antagonism to the dismantling of the welfare state, and a demand for the end of the vicious structure of racial oppression which permeates this country..."

"...the most [progressive] mass organizing campaigns have been those of people of color, including Latin American immigrants steeled in struggles in the police states which were their homelands.

"...rather than unionized workers isolating themselves from their communities and becoming 'special interest groups,' they can become vital parts of communities rebuilding themselves and gaining control over their own fates.

"...a labor movement needs a labor ideology, a worker-centered way of seeing the world and interpreting what happens in it. This implies, in turn, an independent labor politics, a politics of ideology first and foremost. Then, fights for higher wages and union democracy will occur within a radically different context than is now the case... An independent and oppositional politics, combined with aggressive organizing, is also more likely to achieve the political reforms needed by workers to organize further.

"If the labor movement does not assert a political program of social and economic justice it will have great difficulty mounting an effective challenge to the control which corporate America exerts over our lives...Only when labor does develop an independent politics will it be able to become a movement."

Fernando Gapasin and Michael Yates, "Organizing the Unorganized," Monthly Review, July/August 1997

THE 1998 ELECTION IS STARTING.

AND WE NEED YOUR HELP NOW!!!

The Anti-Labor initiative aims to silence the voice of working people by taking unions out of politics. It would force Labor to sit on the sidelines during the November 1998 elections, while Labor's enemies participate in the gubernatorial election (and other campaigns) unopposed.

BUT WE MAY BE ABLE TO STOP IT NOW. The Anti-Labor initiative campaign is behind schedule in collecting signatures. Their deadline is November 13. With only 9 weeks to go, they still need more than 550,000 signatures. If we pressure their signature gathering, they may fail to qualify.

AND MOST PEOPLE WON'T SIGN IF TOLD WHAT THIS INITIATIVE WILL DO TO WORKING PEOPLE.

Based on what we have found, we are mounting a public education campaign targeted to the places and times the petitioners are attempting to get their signatures.

If our education effort slows down signature gathering, the petition may miss the June ballot, or at least, they will have to pay more money to get their signatures.

WHAT WE CAN DO!!!

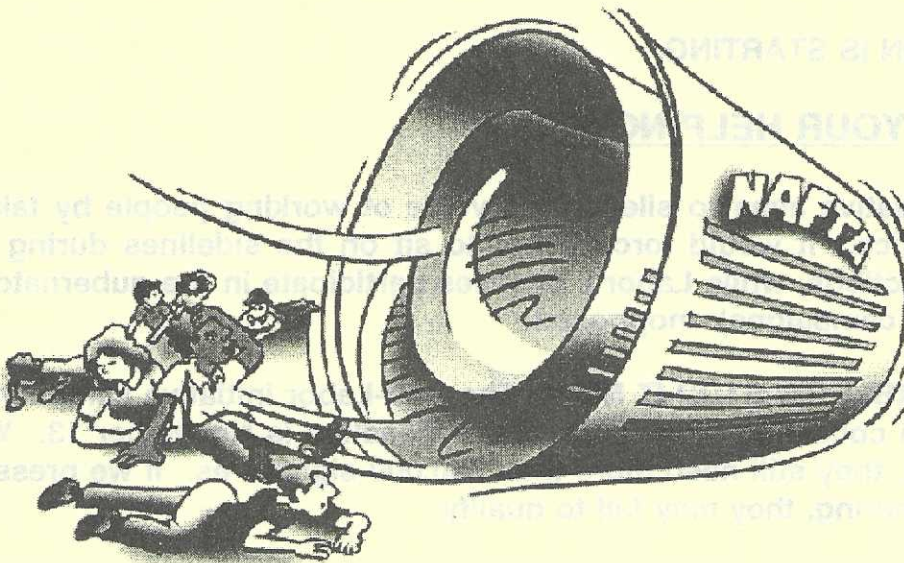
Our plan is to educate the public at the limited number of locations in Fresno County where signatures are being solicited. In pairs, "Truth Squads" will talk with every person approached by the petitioner.

HANDING OUT LEAFLETS REINFORCES SPOKEN MESSAGE, BUT LEAFLETS DON'T REPLACE OUR VOICE!

More information on "Truth Squad" training and the Anti-Labor Initiative can be obtained by contacting Randy Ghan, Secretary-Treasurer, Fresno, Madera, Tulare and Kings Counties Central Labor Council office (209-275-1404), or Kirk Vogt, FMTK CLC Political Director.

Remember, a short time committment NOW,
will save you much more time LATER!!!

The "fast track" brought us NAFTA, and look where that got us.



What would you call a trade agreement that lets corporations ship our jobs across the border, profit from lower wages, harm our environment and jeopardize the safety of our food? It's a fast-track NAFTA deal hurriedly negotiated without input from Congress and without rules to protect workers or consumers.

Over the last three and a half years, the fast-track NAFTA deal has cost American workers 420,000 jobs. More contaminated food has found its way into America's supermarkets. Unsafe trucks are spilling out onto the nation's highways. Illegal drug trafficking is on the rise. And air and water pollution has become much worse along the U.S.-Mexico border, where incidences of hepatitis A are now two to five times the national average.

Now big corporations are asking Congress to let the president negotiate more fast-track NAFTA deals. But why don't we learn from our mistakes? let's slow down and get it right.



From the working men and
women of the AFL-CIO

**Call 1-800-97-AFLCIO. Tell your representatives in Congress
to say no to fast-track trade deals.**

STOP THE LAUNCH OF THE CASSINI SPACE PROBE

*On October 6, NASA plans to launch the Cassini Space Probe from Cape Canaveral. On board will be 72.3 pounds of plutonium-238, **the most deadly form of plutonium**, a radioactive isotope 280 times more radioactive than the plutonium-239 which is used in atomic weapons and found in nuclear waste.*

The Cassini launch could endanger millions of lives on earth. Scientists estimate that 20-30 million deaths from cancers alone would be caused by a re-entry accident. Other effects of exposure could include an increased incidence of genetic diseases and birth defects. Just one pound of plutonium-238, hypothetically, if evenly distributed, could induce lung cancer in every person on earth. A launch pad accident would cause a rain of radioactive particles resulting in millions of cancer deaths.

***"If Cassini makes an inadvertent re-entry into the earth's atmosphere during flyby and breaks up, dispersing plutonium, approximately five billion of the estimated 7-8 billion people living on the planet could receive 99% or more of the radiation exposure,"** according to NASA's own environmental impact statement. The biological impact of a Cassini accident is beyond our imagination.*

This deadly nuclear experiment must be stopped

The history of the nukes in space program has been riddled with accidents and cover-ups. Three out of 24 U.S. space missions and 6 out of 39 known Russian missions involving nuclear materials met with accidents. On November 17, 1996, a Russian Mars probe carrying half a pound of plutonium came crashing down along a 200 mile swath of Chile and Bolivia, vaporizing into a fireball and disintegrating over a highly populous area of South America.

- ▶ Cassini is to be launched by a Titan IV rocket. Titan IV has a spotty safety record. In 1993 a Titan IV rocket exploded on its launch pad and blew its spy satellite payload to bits.
- ▶ NASA estimates the risk of a launch pad accident is 900-1. Other experts say the odds are really more like 20-1. **Even a risk of 900-1 is too great!**

A safe alternative for powering missions like Cassini does exist.

The European Space Agency has already developed highly efficient solar cell technology for deep space missions. Most of NASA's earth orbit satellites already use solar power. Several studies have indicated that deep space missions such as Cassini could be powered by solar cells.

Cassini will cost between 1.5 and 3.4 billion dollars. Even if the mission is successful, billions of taxpayers' dollars will be spent on nuclear experiments in space while education, medical, arts and social programs are brutally slashed to balance the budget.

IT'S NOT WORTH THE RISK!

Contact the president:
White House, Washington D.C. 20500
(202) 456-2461
Email: president@whitehouse.gov

And your congressmen and senators:
U.S. Senate or House of Representatives
Washington D. C. 20515 or 20510
(202) 224- 3121 (ask for your representative)