

Labor/Community ALLIANCE

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OCTOBER 1998

United Farm Workers convention emphasizes elections, strawberry campaign

by John Bog

FRESNO, Calif.—Organizing and contract gains, as well as the upcoming election for California's next governor, were the focus here Sept. 5 and 6 at the United Farm Workers' 14th Constitutional Convention. The theme of this important and moving session was "Realizing Cesar's Dream." The UFW, founded by the late Cesar Chavez (d. 1993), is realizing his dream by "extending the benefits of UFW contracts" and bringing about "real change for farm worker families," said UFW president Arturo Rodriguez.

Since the beginning of a major new organizing drive in 1994, the UFW has won 16 straight secret-ballot union elections and 21 new contracts with growers. Membership has grown by 6,000 workers, to more than 26,000.

The convention highlighted UFW campaigns to organize Central Coast strawberry workers, as well as Gallo wine workers in Sonoma County and California vegetable, tree fruit and packing workers.

The convention began Saturday morning with a bold video about the UFW, past and present. The video, projected onto large screens, contained footage of some ugly confrontations with company-union thugs at strawberry-grower Coastal Berry in Watsonville. In one scene a supporter of the phony union dumped a box of berries on a young UFW sister. She was shown later proudly proclaiming that the scuffle had absolutely "no effect on my determination to fight."

The video highlighted UFW accomplishments, including establishment of "Radio Campesino" stations in several western states, the union's successful housing construction

program, and the benefit packages for farm workers offered both through negotiated contracts with employers, and available solely through the union. Speaking after the video, Rodriguez declared the convention "historic." "It will be the last UFW convention this century," he said, "and it commemorates the fifth anniversary of Cesar Chavez's death."

Rodriguez told the crowd that the UFW's black eagle is "known and respected throughout the world," and that it is imperative that the union "create alliances in other states and

countries, among workers and unions in the same industries." He pointed out the leadership potential of Latinos in the United States, and the important role the UFW is expected to play in that evolution. "Our Latino community is demanding leadership, demanding that members of this union respond," Rodriguez said.

On union organizing, Rodriguez emphasized the importance—and often the grueling challenge—of getting a contract with the employer. "Gaining the first contract is a sacred achievement. . . . The worst contract is the one *not signed*." Rodriguez also called the election of Democratic gubernatorial candidate Gray Davis, running against ultra-right Republican Dan Lungren, "extremely important . . . to ensure that the Agricultural Labor Relations Act is enforced in a way that benefits farm workers."

UFW co-founder and Secretary-Treasurer Dolores Huerta compared the anti-immigrant, anti-Latino, anti-Black and anti-Asian sentiment of the Republican Party to that of the former power elite in South Africa, where the majority is Black, but power was monopolized by the white minority. Huerta said Republicans want that kind of structure here in

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Get Up, Stand Up

Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations
Universal Declaration of Human Rights
Saturday, October 24 Details Inside

The purpose

of Labor/Community Alliance is threefold: (1) to strengthen and unite the labor movement and the progressive community in the Central San Joaquin Valley through information sharing, (2) to promote and defend the rights of local working people, and (3) to help organize the unorganized. This publication is printed monthly and includes a calendar of events.

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The Pan Valley Institute

Immigrant communities in civic action

by Myrna Martinez Nateras, with Larry Langford

The Pan Valley Institute is the American Friends Service Committee's latest effort to help democratize the economic system of the United States. Funded by the James Irvine Foundation, the institute provides a gathering place for people who are working for the participation of immigrants in the economic and political processes that shape the life of the Central Valley. Its purpose is to help in the formation of state and local policies that will protect labor rights, promote access to economic resources, protect the environment, provide equal educational opportunities, and encourage immigrants to become United States citizens so that they can have a voice in American politics.

The Pan Valley Institute will focus its efforts on creating networks of active immigrant leaders who can further the cause of democratic participation in our communities. The people we hope to assist include volunteer teachers in citizenship classes, community activists promoting voter registration, first-time candidates for public office, participants in business or tenant associations, and anyone interested in promoting the rights of labor and women.

The institute will offer two-day educational workshops for volunteers who wish to help in its efforts. These workshops are designed in collaboration with the participants themselves, in order to more effectively address their needs and interests. The goal is to bring together people who can forge links between groups for common action across the Valley on behalf of immigrant peoples.

The Pan Valley Institute's administrative offices are located at 1436 W. Shaw Ave., Suite A, Fresno, CA 93711. For more information, contact Myrna Martinez Nateras at 222-7678, or by e-mail at www.mnateras@afsc-pmr.org.

Boycott Wells Fargo

The Steelworkers Union is asking everyone who banks with Wells Fargo to change banks and close their accounts. Wells Fargo is bankrolling the union-busting activities of Oregon Steel in Pueblo, Colorado. Hundreds of strikers have been permanently replaced, and Wells Fargo continues to provide funds to the otherwise bankrupt company.

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Fresno Bee fires employee for union organizing

by Mike Rhodes, Labor/Community Alliance



On Wednesday, September 2, *The Fresno Bee* fired Jerald Haydostian because he was actively organizing a union in the transportation department. Haydostian has worked as a driver at *The Fresno Bee* for 17 years. The Communications Workers of America immediately filed an unfair labor practice with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). Now, we are asking for your support in this labor dispute.

Workers in the transportation department filed a petition for an election with the NLRB on the very day Haydostian was fired. Some of us don't believe his termination was a coincidence. Jerry started the organizing drive in the transportation department. Without him, the effort to build a union would not have gotten off the ground. Through Haydostian's efforts an organizing committee was formed and an overwhelming majority of co-workers signed union authorization cards.

The Bee alleges that on August 26 Haydostian lied to his supervisor when he requested time off to help his sick mother; she was admitted to Saint Agnes Medical Center the next day. The bogus charge that Haydostian was fired for lying is nothing more than an excuse to cover *The Bee's* real motivation, which is to stop the union organizing drive in the transportation department.

We demand a public apology from *The Fresno Bee* for this outrageous and illegal act to destroy the union. We further demand *The Fresno Bee* immediately reinstate Haydostian and give him full back pay. We are calling on our friends in the Labor/Community Alliance to support us in this struggle by contacting publisher Keith Moyer and letting him know what you think about *The Fresno Bee's* treatment of its workers. For more information, contact:

Transportation Department Organizing Committee
Communications Workers of America Local 9408
130 W. Shields, Fresno CA 93705
248-9408 clr2@igc.apc.org

The Fresno Bee will be forced by the National Labor Relations Board to reinstate Jerald Haydostian and give him full back pay because he was, without a doubt, fired illegally. *The Bee* wants this process to take as long as possible. *The Bee* would like to wait until after the election for union representation before it brings Jerry back. Why?

- ❶ As long as Jerry is not in the transportation department, he can't talk with his co-workers about the union.
- ❷ His firing is a form of intimidation.
- ❸ They want transportation department employees to think that they will be fired if they visibly support the union.

Our best hope for getting Jerry back on the job right away is to turn up the heat on *The Fresno Bee*. *The Bee* has to know that people in Fresno care about this issue. That means that YOU have to call or write Keith Moyer, the publisher, and tell him what you think about this outrageous firing. We can't let them get away with this!

Contact Keith Moyer at *The Fresno Bee* about this incident at 441-6060; *The Fresno Bee*, 1626 E Street, Fresno CA 93786; or kmoyer@fresnobee.com.

Labor Day Speech

by Jerald Haydostian

(Given at the Labor Day Picnic sponsored by the Fresno/Madera/Kings/Tulare Central Labor Council, Building Trades Council & Coalition of Labor in Fresno.)

Before last week I would have avoided public speaking like the plague because I am so shy. But there is an incredible purpose behind all this that goes beyond my personal limits. I was asked to speak today because I am a perfect example of a worker willing to risk everything just to make conditions better for my fellow employees.

The Fresno Bee took me up on that offer by taking everything away, firing me for organizing our department and using me as an example to instill fear in others to discourage anyone else from continuing my efforts. For reasons like this, we have, and will exercise, the right to stand up to companies like *The Fresno Bee* that seem to think they can get away without providing the necessities of life for people who break their backs to make them record profits.

(continued on p. 6)

Why are workers organizing at *The Bee*?

Workers in the transportation department at *The Fresno Bee* are organizing a union because:

- They are given no dental or health care benefits.
- Transportation drivers are forced to work all holidays and receive no extra pay for working those days.
- They have no sick leave.
- Employees in transportation get no paid vacation time.

- They work up to 35 hours a week but are classified as part-time employees to avoid paying benefits.
- Drivers earn little more than minimum wage. Someone with 15 years' experience might make \$10 an hour.
- They want an end to favoritism by supervisors and managers.

One Letter = One Hundred Votes

by Larry Langford, Labor/Community Alliance

Update on Headwaters Agreement



As news reports indicated last month, the deal brokered earlier this year by Senator Dianne Feinstein between the government and Pacific Lumber Co. to save an ancient redwood grove in Humboldt County known as Headwaters may be falling apart even before it has been fully ratified and implemented.

Under the terms of the agreement with the logging company, the federal and state governments would jointly purchase 7,500 acres of virgin redwoods in Northern California, including Headwaters, and declare an additional 8,000 acres of privately held land to be off-limits to logging for the next 50 years, which is much less than the 60,000 acres environmentalists wanted to see preserved. The agreement would cost the federal government \$380 million, with an additional \$130 million to be paid by the state of California.

The response by environmentalists has been divided, with some objecting that the logging company will still be allowed to harvest trees from a 900-year-old grove, while other are praising the protections it guarantees for the habitats of the marbled murrelet, a seabird, and of the coho salmon, which is currently protected under the federal Endangered Species Act. Whatever the agreement's strengths and weaknesses, however, Pacific Lumber Co. is already failing to fulfill its part of the bargain, especially in regard to protecting the salmon, an example of bad faith that does not bode well for the future of the forests.

Large, old-growth trees are vital for the well-being of the coho salmon because their shade keeps the water cool, and when they eventually die and fall into the streams, their trunks provide a spawning habitat. Under the terms of the agreement, the loggers would have to preserve for the next 50 years the 10 tallest trees in every acre along salmon streams. But in the logging strategy that Pacific Lumber Co. was required to submit, this agreement has been changed to state that 10 trees, regardless of age, will be preserved in each acre. Also of concern is the company's wish to rebuild logging roads in winter, or to build new roads over streams, which could lead to choking of the waterways by sedimentation.

Two bills currently in the state legislature, SB 533 and AB 65, would provide for the release of the \$130 million to implement this agreement. Contact your senator or assembly member and ask that at the very least the Pacific Lumber Co. be held to the highest standards of environmental protection. If you want to see the details of the habitat conservation plan for Headwaters, go to <http://ceres.ca.gov/headwaters>. For information on how to contact members of the legislature, go to <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov>.

Math through the years

Teaching Math in 1950:

A logger sells a truckload of lumber for \$100. His cost of production is $\frac{4}{5}$ of the price. What is his profit?

Teaching Math in 1960:

A logger sells a truckload of lumber for \$100. His cost of production is $\frac{4}{5}$ of the price, or \$80. What is his profit?

Teaching Math in 1970:

A logger exchanges a set "L" of lumber for a set "M" of money. The cardinality of set "M" is 100. Each element is worth one dollar. Make 100 dots representing the elements of the set "M". The set "C", the cost of production, contains 20 fewer points than set "M". Represent the set "C" as a subset of set "M" and answer the following question: What is the cardinality of the set "P" of profits?

Teaching Math in 1980:

A logger sells a truckload of lumber for \$100. His cost of production is \$80 and his profit is \$20. Your assignment: Underline the number 20.

Teaching Math in 1990:

By cutting down beautiful forest trees, the logger makes \$20. What do you think of this way of making a living? Topic for class participation after answering the question: How did the forest birds and squirrels feel as the logger cut down the trees? There are no wrong answers.

Teaching Math in 1996:

By laying off 402 of its loggers, a company improves its stock price from \$80 to \$100. How much capital gain per share does the CEO make by exercising his stock options at \$80? Assume capital gains are no longer taxed, because this encourages investment.

Teaching Math in 1997:

A company outsources all of its loggers. They save on benefits, and when demand for their product is down the logging workforce can easily be cut back. The average logger employed by the company earned \$50,000, had 3 weeks vacation, received a nice retirement plan and medical insurance. The contracted logger charges \$50 an hour. Was outsourcing a good move?

Teaching Math in 1998:

A logging company exports its wood-finishing jobs to its Indonesian subsidiary and lays off the corresponding half of its US workers (the higher-paid half). It clear-cuts 95% of the forest, leaving the rest for the spotted owl, and lays off all its remaining US workers. It tells the workers that the spotted owl is responsible for the absence of felleable trees and lobbies Congress for exemption from the Endangered Species Act. Congress instead exempts the company from all federal regulation. What is the return on investment of the lobbying costs?



Tune in! Street Heat, every fourth Friday, 5-6 P.M., KFCF 88.1-FM. Features Central Valley labor/community activists!

Calendar of Events October 1998

Friday, October 2

Yard Sale Pricing Party, 12–9 P.M., 985 N. Van Ness. Donations appreciated. Call Angela at 435-6383.

Saturday, October 3

Yard Sale to Benefit Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 8 A.M.–2 P.M., 985 N. Van Ness.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom special luncheon meeting and installation of officers at "Mexico Tipico," 4857 E. Butler Ave. Call 266-4979.

Monday, October 5

Deadline to register to vote in the November 3 election. Call 488-3246.

Thursday, October 8

Balfa Toujours in concert, 7:30 P.M., Fresno Art Museum: \$10; children under 12, \$5. Balfa Toujours' four-piece band is at the center of the Cajun tradition. Sponsored by the Fresno Folklore Society. Call 456-0453.

Saturday, October 10

Fresno Center for Nonviolence Board Meeting, 9:30 A.M., 985 N. Van Ness. Guests welcome. Call 237-3225.

Monday–Sunday, October 12–18

National week of actions protesting INS raids. National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights: (510) 465-1984 <nnirr@nnirr.org>.

Monday, October 12

Romina Green Presentation on recent trip to Cuba with Pastors for Peace, 7:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Photos, music, and more. Call 276-7865.

Tuesday, October 13

Monthly Potluck & Discussion, 6:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Maria Telesco of Amnesty International and Death Penalty Focus will speak about human rights as they apply to prisoners and accused persons. Potluck at 6:30; program at 7:30.

Thursday, October 15

Deadline for submission of information for November issue of *Labor/Community Alliance*. Call 226-0477.

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

Saturday, October 17

Car Caravan for Prisoners' Human Rights. Northern California targets Chowchilla Women's Prisons; on to State-wide Final Rally at Corcoran State Prison. Call (510) 655-2931.

NIKE Mobilization. Focus on Foot Locker and other stores selling Nike products. Contact Campaign for Labor Rights: (541) 344-5410 <CLR@igc.apc.org>.

Monday, October 19

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

Friday, October 23

Street Heat, 5–6 P.M., KFCF 88.1-FM. Featuring Central Valley labor/community activists.

Saturday, October 24

Declaration of Human Rights Event, 9:30 A.M.–3:30 P.M., Fresno City College auditorium. See page 6 for details. Call 224-0924 or 229-9807.

Cats and Jammers, 7:30 P.M., Fresno Art Museum: \$10; children under 12, \$5. Sensational Bay Area trio plays music from hot swing to low-down blues. Sponsored by the Fresno Folklore Society. Call 456-0453.

Reggae & Zydeco Fund-raiser and Art Exhibit, to benefit HIV prevention. Dance at the Tower Theater to the sounds of Bad Boys Zydeco, featuring Evo and Jemmy Bluestein, and Morning Star. Preview original art by Valley artists. Art reception starts at 5:30 P.M. Doors open for concert at 7:30 P.M. Call 445-9111.

Monday, October 26

Labor/Community Alliance/Jobs with Justice, 5:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Call 226-0477.

Tuesday, October 27

ACLU, 7 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence.

Friday, October 30

Isabel Parra Performs in the Latin American Music Series, 7:30 P.M., Arte Americas, 1630 Van Ness. Call 266-2623.

Ongoing Activities/Programs

Street Heat, Fourth Friday, 5–6 P.M., KFCF 88.1-FM. Featuring Central Valley labor/community activists.

Scalzo Talk, Mon & Thurs 6–9 P.M., KAAT 103.1-FM. Interviews with local people on labor and political issues.

Weekly

Every Friday, 9 A.M.–1 P.M., Mexican Consulate, 830 Van Ness Ave. Coalition of groups holds a "Campaign for Justice" to put pressure on Mexican government to allow people the right to vote, calling for peace in Chiapas and to stop U.S. military intervention in Mexico.

Every Saturday: Food Not Bombs feeds the hungry; 1–2 P.M. near Olive Avenue entrance to Roeding Park.

Celebrate human rights

by Ellie Bluestein, *Women's International League for Peace & Freedom*

Get up, stand up for human rights on Saturday, Oct. 24, when Fresno celebrates the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Take advantage of this great opportunity to learn about some of the key provisions of this document regarding the rights of labor, of women and children, of immigrants and refugees, of prisoners, of the right to equality and freedom from discrimination.

The event will take place at the Fresno City College Auditorium, beginning with registration at 9:30 a.m. and concluding at 3:30 p.m. Morning workshops will be led by knowledgeable people in our community who have been willing to get up and stand up: Sudarshan Kapoor of the Fresno Human Relations Committee; Maria Telesco of Death Penalty Focus; Gloria Hernandez, fighter for immigrants' rights; John Veen of Labor/Community Alliance; Joyce Huggins, activist in the Association for the Education of Young Children; and Jean Kennedy Douglas of the Women's Studies Program at Fresno City College. They will be bringing in others from our community who are informed on these issues to focus on what impact the Declaration of Human Rights has already had and can have in the future.

Bring a sack lunch to get you through the day. Student organizations will be selling soft drinks. Campus parking regulations will be relaxed for the day. A cultural program at 1:00 will feature B'hai Youth Dancers, Punjabi Dance Group and the McLane High School Chorus.

Ann Fagan Ginger, executive director of the Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute of Berkeley, will present the keynote address at 1:30. A lawyer, professor, and activist for peace and justice, Ginger's 24 books include *Nuclear Weapons Are Illegal*. She has taught law and graduate courses for 30 years, and has been honored as outstanding teacher at four universities. Ginger has served on many panels and hearing boards, and is an expert on United Nations documents and their uses.

To reserve your place and ensure space in the workshops of your choice, complete this form and send it, along with \$1, to Joyce Huggins, 5075-B N. Wishon Avenue, Fresno, CA 93704-2478

Name _____ Address _____

Organization _____ Phone _____

Choice of Workshops

- 1 The Right to Equality and Freedom from Discrimination
- 2 The Rights of Prisoners
- 3 The Rights of Immigrants
- 4 The Right to Form and Join Trade Unions
- 5 The Rights of Women
- 6 The Rights of Children

_____ 10:00 workshop choice _____ 11:15 workshop choice

For more information, call 224-0924 or 229-9807.

Labor Day Speech, cont. from page 3

For 17 years I have seen our benefits and wages disappear, little by little, with every new budget era, but finally it was too much! And since no one was willing to risk all they had to stand up and speak out to *The Bee's* executives, I decided to do so myself.

I contacted Mike Rhodes of the Communications Workers of America, after reading one of his newsletters, and in no time we got the ball rolling, organized a committee, and eventually had twice the number of union authorization cards required to call for a vote.

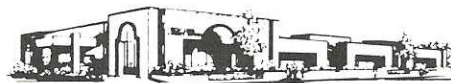
We got cards from more than 70 percent of our department in two weeks, proving the need for a union. It seems no coincidence that the day we filed for the election was the same day I was fired. *The Bee* knew I was the main organizer, and didn't hesitate to break the law in firing me, or break several laws along the way to try to stop this unionizing effort. I know. I filed at least four unfair labor practices against them myself.

They made the mistake in assuming that if they fired me, they would be successful in thwarting our efforts, but they were wrong. We took it to the TV and even did a radio show, and I am still here, and more vocal than ever.

I will not stop until those votes are tallied because, again, I didn't start this for me. I started this for the people I love, and even people I don't know, because I realize how *The Bee* will treat them, too.

So now we ask that you, the Labor community, stand with us, that we won't stand alone, and call *The Fresno Bee*, express your dissatisfaction not only with their actions, but also with how they treat their employees.

At this point, we all need to stand together against this giant, because I have stood alone too long and no one listened. But together we are invincible, together we can make this happen, together we can make a difference!



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UFW Convention, cont. from page 1

California, which is now a "minority majority" state. As proof she pointed to the racist and anti-worker propositions 187, 209 and 226.

One of the keynote speakers was Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa, who started his activist life in the Chicano movement with a UFW boycott in 1968. "We cannot forget where we came from," he said. "I am the son of immigrants. My father came to the U.S. in 1951 to work, to create a better future for his children. We know that at this time in California there are those who would like to take us back in time, to when children didn't have the right to an education. We will not go back."

"Instead of trying to punish immigrants," Villaraigosa declared, "political leaders should say 'thank you immigrants for everything you've done for this great state and country.'"

Among other speakers were Art Pulaski, executive secretary-treasurer, California Labor Federation; state Senate President Pro Tem John Burton; state Senate Industrial Relations Committee chair Hilda Solis; Miguel Contreras, Secretary Treasurer, Los Angeles County Federation of Labor; and—by video—AFL-CIO President John Sweeney.

Voices from the fields



Conference delegate and member organizer **David Rosas** is a strawberry picker at Coastal Berry in Watsonville. He has been with the UFW for eight years. "Even though the company signed a letter saying they would be neutral and respect our right to organize, they let their foremen threaten and intimidate us. They say if we

don't go along with them, we'll be fired. One tactic they use is to separate one of us from the others and talk to us. [We fight back by] talking very loud so other workers can hear our responses, and we loudly repeat what they are trying to say to us secretly. The most recent election we lost to a company union, which didn't make any sense. It's made up of foremen and supervisors. We filed many Unfair Labor Practice charges with the Agricultural Labor Relations Board. The ALRB has not responded."

When asked what the outside world should know about Coastal Berry, Rosas said, "I would like other people to know what happens to us out here. How unjust the company is to us. They intimidate us and scare our families. We need people to support us so we can have our victory—a contract. We're still organizing. We're not quitting. The union and the workers, we're a team. We're ready and willing to fight to the end."

Jessie De La Cruz, a UFW activist for three decades, was a visitor to this year's UFW convention. De La Cruz,

retired now, lives in Kingsburg. She has been a member since May 1, 1965. "I was very proud I signed up on May Day," De La Cruz said. "Our main concern now is getting signed contracts, with language about pesticide safety, rest rooms, fresh clean water, and *dignity*. Even though we've had elections and won, often the employer refuses to bargain," said De La Cruz. "What you have to do then is exert pressure, for example on the ALRB, make them sensitive to the needs of the workers. After all, that's why the ALRB was formed. But now it seems to always favor the employers. Growers have the money, but we have the people. And we have as much a right as anyone to seek a better life in this country."

"Farm workers are not looking for a handout, just for what's right. Some farmers treat their animals better than they treat people. They take their dogs to the doctor when they get sick. But when a farm worker gets sick, they say 'Oh here, take an aspirin.' That's it. It gets me angry to think about it because I know what I went through. Even one of our own county supervisors, a farmer, got caught with farm workers on his property living in trees and abandoned cars."

De La Cruz isn't falling for the Republicans' new Latino-friendly line. "The Republicans may want to attract Latinos now, but when did they ever bother to join us? We've had marches. We've had conventions. We've had the unveiling of Cesar Chavez statues. Where have they been? They're out there with the growers. They're not out here with the working people." On the subject of corporate welfare, De La Cruz wisely pointed out: "The growers *farm the government*. When they have a problem, whining 'El Niño, El Niño,' or whatever, they get what they want."



Singer and worker-organizer **Teresa Pinedo**, of Greenfield, Calif., works at D'Arrigo, where they farm broccoli, lettuce and rapini. She has been a member organizer for six months. The struggle for a contract at D'Arrigo has been going on for 22 years! "Salaries have been the same at D'Arrigo for five years: \$6.50/hour," she said. "They offer a

piece rate, but they never tell you what it is beforehand. The piece rate is really a phony incentive. It's supposed to make us want to go faster, but it doesn't really pay. When we go into the field the first time we can make good money, but then going in for the second cut—there's much less to cut! So you lose money later."

"Now there's a machine driver we have to pay out of our own pockets. We follow this machine through the fields and throw the crops into it. And they take from our combined salaries to pay the driver." When asked about company-sponsored benefits, like a health plan, Pinedo said "Medical plan? Yes, we have one. It pays only five percent. Ninety-five percent is on the worker!"

Amnesty International opposes death penalty

by Maria Telesco, Amnesty International/Death Penalty Focus

For the first time ever, Amnesty International will concentrate its efforts on the United States, specifically on substandard prison conditions and the death penalty. The action campaign, which runs from October 1998 through June 1999, will educate Americans about these issues and focus worldwide attention on these human rights abuses in our nation.

As people of faith committed to living their lives with compassion and mercy, leaders of most religious denominations throughout the world have taken an official position in opposition to the death penalty. The United States is the only Western industrialized nation that persists in using this barbaric form of torture against its citizens.

The campaign will begin with Amnesty's First National Weekend of Faith in Action on the Death Penalty, to be held October 9-11, 1998. There is still time for you to participate.

Amnesty International USA calls on individuals and national organizations to implement a program of activities devoted to this cause. Lesson plans, posters, educational and action-oriented projects are available from Amnesty International at no cost. For free materials and information, call the Faith in Action Hotline at 1-800-AMNESTY ext. 508, or write to National Weekend of Faith in Action, Amnesty International USA, 322 Eighth Ave, 10th floor, New York NY 10001. For information about local activities, contact Maria Telesco at 323-4871.

Victory for subs! FASTA petition qualifies



On September 8, Roger Smith of the Public Employment Relations Board notified the Fresno Unified School District that the majority of its substitute teachers support SEIU 535/Fresno Area Substitute Teachers Association (FASTA).

The district has 15 days to respond to the request for union recognition.

Since SEIU/FASTA has already demonstrated majority status, they are urging the school district to immediately recognize the union and begin bargaining. Substitute teachers are asking for a fair daily wage, health benefits and due process.

The district could also require an election, or it may try to block the process by legal maneuver. For more information, contact:

Fresno Area Substitute Teachers Association (FASTA)
2037 West Bullard #202
Fresno, CA 93711 435-5715

Labor/Community Alliance Web Page

<http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Congress/1885/>

Here you will find:

- Labor/Community Alliance Newsletter
- Calendar of events in the Fresno organized labor and progressive community
- Directory of Fresno-area labor and community groups
- Links to other sites & more

E-mail Alert Network

If you have an e-mail address you can receive:

- Updated weekly calendar. Find out about events not included in the newsletter calendar.
- Activist alerts! When a quick response about a community issue is called for you will be the first to know.
- Information about web sites useful to labor and community activists.

The e-mail alert network is a free service of the Labor/Community Alliance. If you are interested in subscribing, send a message to: <clr2@igc.apc.org>

ORGANIZED LABOR ~ "The unsung heroes of our community"



SARAH REYES

Candidate for the
31st Assembly District
P.O. Box 4304
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(209) 222-8646

Whether you're a Democrat, a Republican or an Independent, don't let another anti-worker governor pick your pocket!

Every time we let an anti-worker governor win an election, working people lose. For 16 years, California governors have worked overtime to reward their corporate sponsors by gutting protections for workers. For example:

They ended daily overtime. In 1997, Gov. Wilson ordered state regulators to wipe out eight-hour day protections for more than 8 million California workers, cutting their pay by over \$1 billion. Today, unless they have a strong union contract, workers don't get overtime pay even after 12- or 16-hour shifts. Unions and the California Labor Federation sponsored legislation to restore daily overtime, but Gov. Wilson vetoed the bill.

They raided pensions. In 1992, Gov. Wilson decided to balance the state budget by ripping off \$2.3 billion of state and local pension funds. The governor did not care that for thousands of workers, these funds were their only source of retirement income. To protect their members' pensions, labor unions put Proposition 162 on the November 1992 ballot. Voters stopped Gov. Wilson's pension raid.

They kept a minimum wage that guaranteed poverty. California's minimum wage has dropped steadily since 1988. In 1996, the purchasing power of the minimum wage fell to a 40-year low. Two million Californians worked at the poverty wage of \$4.25 an hour. Governors Deukmejian and Wilson killed proposals to raise the minimum wage. In 1996 labor unions put Proposition 210 on the ballot and raised the minimum wage. They made jobs more hazardous. In 1987, Gov. Deukmejian vetoed funding for Cal-OSHA, workers' safety advocates. Safety inspections and accident investigations were drastically reduced. Unions joined with the California Labor Federation in sponsoring Proposition 97, which restored funding for Cal-OSHA.

They tried to reduce prevailing wages. In 1995, Gov. Wilson sponsored legislation to rewrite the prevailing wage laws. The governor's bill, AB 138, would have cut construction workers' pay on public works jobs by 20 percent. When

his legislation died in the Assembly, Gov. Wilson ordered state regulators to recalculate the prevailing wages and hand construction workers a pay cut. Union members fought back, and the courts agreed that Wilson had acted unlawfully.

They tried to silence working families. It was no surprise that Gov. Wilson chaired the Proposition 226 committee. This 1998 initiative was designed to silence working people by creating two sets of rules for election campaigns. Proposition 226 would have prohibited unions from spending funds for ballot measures designed to protect workers, while billion-dollar corporations would be free to write blank checks. If Proposition 226 had been law, it would have been impossible for unions to save Cal-OSHA, raise the minimum wage or protect pensions.

Labor News

Gas deregulation slowed. The state that first rushed utility deregulation into law is showing signs of sanity. The California legislature passed, and Gov. Pete Wilson was forced to sign, a law that overturns a gas deregulation order by the California Public Utility Commission and prohibits the CPUC from approving or enforcing any new restructuring decisions before Jan. 1, 2000. The State Assembly also passed, by a unanimous vote, a requirement that any further CPUC actions be subject to judicial review. The actions come two months after the Utility Workers Gas Deregulation Summit in Los Angeles.



Drives not lax at L-A-X. A multi-union organizing effort is under way at Los Angeles' massive international airport. HERE Local 814 and SEIU Local 1877 together want to sign up about 3,500 baggage screeners, wheelchair attendants and food and retail workers. First, however, the unions (aided by four AFL-CIO organizers) are pressing the L.A. city council to include airport workers under last year's landmark living wage ordinance, which requires most city contractors to pay their workers at least \$7.39 an hour with family benefits or \$8.64 without. Airlines are fighting the effort.

(more Labor News on p. 10)

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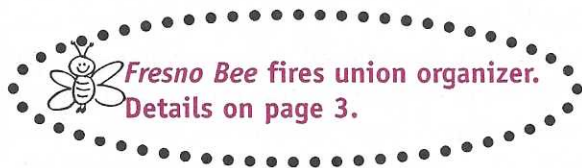
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Labor/Community Alliance

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• Address Correction Requested •



October 5—Deadline to register to vote in the November 3 general election.

October 27—Deadline for County Registrar of Voters to receive requests for absentee ballots.

November 3—General election. Get out and vote! Mailed absentee ballots must be received by this date.

More Labor News

Wilson vetoes firing protections. Last year, the California Court of Appeals ruled that employers can fire higher-paid workers in favor of younger, lower-paid workers, even if that results in a disproportionate adverse impact on older workers. And for the second time this year, Gov. Pete Wilson vetoed legislation, supported by the California Labor Federation, to set aside that decision. Wilson claims employers base decisions solely on economics, not age. Sure, Pete

How did they vote? You can find out where your U.S. senators or representatives stand on working family issues such as Fast Track, fair wages, education, health care, workplace and workers' rights with the AFL-CIO's electronic congressional voting record for 1996 and 1997 now online at www.aflcio.org/vrecord. You can access the information by looking up an individual member of Congress, a state delegation or a specific piece of legislation. It also allows you to download and print complete files.



Part-Time Work, Full-Time Bills. America's booming "new economy" has left behind the 21 million Americans who work part time. That's the conclusion of a new AFL-CIO report, *Part-Time Work, Full-Time Bills*, released last week at Disney World in Orlando, Fla. Part-timers earn lower hourly wages than full-time workers even when they bring the same skills, education and experience to the job. On average, part-timers' hourly wages are just 70 percent of what a full-timer earns. The benefits picture is even worse: 75 percent of full-time workers have health insurance, only 20 percent of part-time workers do.

Part-timers are three times less likely to have pensions and aren't covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act. Fully 70 percent of part-time workers are women. "America's workers deserve full-time work at full-time pay," said AFL-CIO President John Sweeney. "It's time that corporate America stopped overpaying executives and began giving workers a real opportunity to do better for themselves and their families." About 5,000 part-time workers at Disney are organizing with the Service Trades Council, a group of unions representing about 20,000 workers at "the happiest place on Earth." "I work right next to people whom Disney calls permanent casual regular part-time employees," said Murray Cohen, a full-time ride loader for Big Thunder Mountain roller coaster. "But what that really means is that they're underpaid, overworked and have no job security." For a copy of the report, call (202) 637-3962.



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CSU Faculty Teach Without a Contract

Trustees Refuse to Budge

California's state university system was once a model for the nation. But now we aren't even planning four years ahead. With 18,000 faculty and over 333,000 full- and part-time students, the California State University system is the largest senior college system in the United States. The CSU system graduates 66% of the state's teachers and 60% more business professionals, computer scientists and engineers than all other California colleges and universities combined. Yet, this valuable California resource has been ignored in budget after budget.

What the CSU faculty wants parents, students and the public to know:

- CSU, Fresno has **lost 120 tenure-track, full-time faculty** over the last 7 years. 1,200 full-time faculty have been lost system-wide. The CSU system has been left with a dangerously low base of faculty available to operate departments, advise students and participate in campus governance or community service.
- The CSU **exploits part-time faculty**. By Spring, 1998, **48% of CSU faculty were no longer full-time**. CSU is one of the largest employers of temporary workers in the state. Part-time faculty have limited contact with students. None of these employees have real job security and only a few have medical benefits.
- Average **class size has increased by approximately 15%**.
- **CSU faculty salaries have fallen over 11%** below comparable institutions, yet **they teach 33% more sections** than the national standard. CSU presidents are receiving a 30% raise while faculty have received a 1.43% raise since 1990.
- **Buildings, lab facilities and computer systems** in classrooms and offices **are not properly maintained or upgraded**.
- At the same time as the State budget has posted record surpluses of over \$4.4 billion, the university trustees continue to ask what is the very **least** they can do to maintain quality education at the CSU.

RALLY

*Please join the California
Faculty Association in
supporting quality education
at California State Univ., Fresno*

OCTOBER 5, 1998

Monday

11:30, Press Conference

12:00 noon, RALLY

*3:00 p.m., Informational
Picketing*

*at the fountain in the center of
Fresno State's campus*

For further information, call:

CFA @ 278-4821 or 278-2579