

Labor/Community ALLIANCE

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APRIL 1998

It's about power

Prop. 226 hurts workers

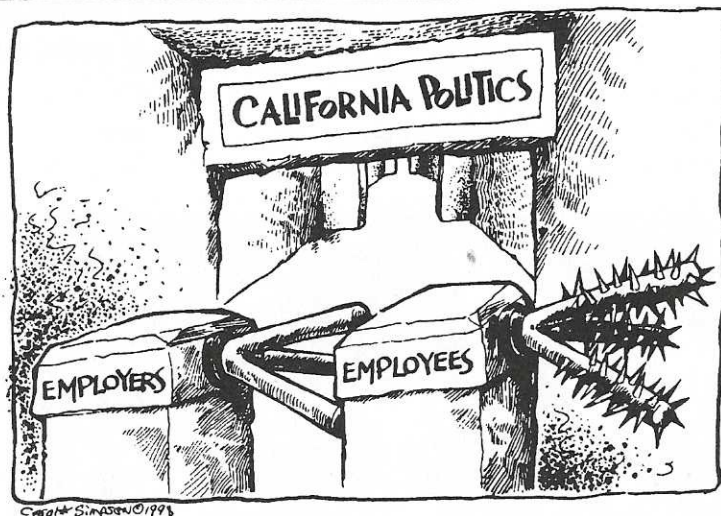
by Michael J. Parks, Fresno Field Director,
California School Employees Association

Today, in our country, 1 percent of the population controls over 40 percent of the wealth. In fact, reports estimate 10 percent of the population controls almost 90 percent of all private property and assets in the United States—that's 90 percent! Apparently, that much power is not enough!

On June 2 labor unions face the biggest challenge ever to continue to provide workers in California with a political voice—Prop. 226, the "Anti-Worker" Initiative. Corporate America already outspends organized labor at a ratio of 11–1 for political activities, but Prop. 226 would slash organized labor's political clout to virtually zero.

\$ Corporate America already outspends organized labor at a ratio of 11–1 for political activities. Prop. 226 would slash organized labor's political clout to virtually zero.

This "Anti-Worker" Prop. 226 is very seductive. It sounds so fair to propose a law that requires a union member's approval to spend money on political activities. But, HELLO!!! These laws already exist! Union members already vote on the amount of dues they pay and how they spend their dues. Union members also have the right to object to having their dues spent on political action and/or union organizing. They merely notify their union of their objections. In fact, service



fee payers can even get a rebate from their union on the amount of dues spent on political activity and organizing.

The real goal of Prop. 226 supporters is to create unrealistic restrictions on unions so they will be unable to effectively participate in political activities—that's why Prop. 226 is "Anti-Worker."

Organized labor is the only political voice that speaks on behalf of workers. Organized labor's political activities benefit all workers, whether the worker is a union member or not! The recent passage of the minimum wage initiative was due to labor's political efforts, even though almost every union member in the state made more than minimum wage. Why? Because union members know the plight of any worker affects the plight of all workers: overtime statutes, disability insurance, workers' compensation, worker safety, pension laws, social security, labor codes, public education, etc. It's all about giving workers a voice!

Prop. 226 is about power! This "Anti-Worker" Initiative is an obvious attempt to take away every worker's political power. Don't let it happen! **Vote NO on Proposition 226!**

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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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Universal health plan for California

by Ray Ensher, Health Care for All, Central California

Senator Barbara Lee has introduced universal health care legislation in the California Senate. Cal Care, SB 2123, and is currently in the Health and Human Services committee, where it is scheduled to be heard on April 15. Senator Diane E. Watson, a co-author, is committee chair.

This legislation is being sponsored by Health Care for All California. The Preamble to the proposed law as presented reads: "This Act establishes 'Cal Care,' a health insurance program to provide California residents with all medically necessary services *by a provider of choice*. Cal Care replaces the current mixture of public and private health insurance plans with a publicly financed universal health care plan with a single administrative and payment mechanism."

Letters of support can be sent to Senator Barbara Lee, your state senator and members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, especially Committee Chair Diana Watson.



Equal Educational Opportunity Initiative

Last year, a group of Berkeley law students decided to change the state of diversity in education by placing the Equal Educational Opportunity Initiative on the November 1998 ballot. After seeing the fall law school entering class, with one African-American, 14 Latinos, and zero Native Americans, and learning that other UC schools had a projected 50 to 70 percent drop in underrepresented minority enrollment, they decided it was time to do something.

The Equal Educational Opportunity Initiative reads: "In order to provide equal opportunity, promote diversity, and combat discrimination in public education, the state may consider the economic background, race, sex, ethnicity and national origin of qualified individuals." The EEOI will increase access to education for all Californians, from college and university programs all the way to elementary school programs that target schools with high percentages of underrepresented minorities (under attack right now by Governor Wilson). The EEOI has been endorsed by a number of organizations and individuals, including the NAACP and the Reverend Jesse Jackson.

What can you do to help? **Call the EEOI Fresno office at 237-3736** to pick up some petitions. Right now, students and community volunteers all over California are collecting the 1.2 million signatures needed by April 15 to get this initiative on the ballot.



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Central Labor Council fights Prop. 226

FMKT Central Labor Council

As the June primary election approaches, labor activists throughout California are mobilizing to defeat the most scurrilous attack on California workers since the right-to-work battle in 1958. The Fresno, Madera, Kings & Tulare Central Labor Council is in the fight!

Letters have been sent to each of the council affiliates by CLC Secretary-Treasurer Randy Ghan spelling out what could become of organized labor if Prop. 226 passes. Commitment cards have been sent to each Local Union to forward to its members, asking for their support and time to assist in defeating this business-sponsored attack on workers. A phone bank will begin April 6, with volunteers gathering at the Laborers Union Hall, 5431 E. Hedges, Fresno, to make calls between 6 and 9 P.M.

Local efforts to maximize the vote against Prop. 226 will be volunteer-intensive, following the strategy of the California Federation of Labor. Each affiliated Local Union is being asked to "sponsor" the phone bank approximately once every two weeks through June 2 to reach union families and convince them of the need to defeat Proposition 226. Individual volunteers are urged to call Randy Gahn or Kirk Vogt at the Central Labor Council office, 275-1151.

Proposition 226 Speaker Training

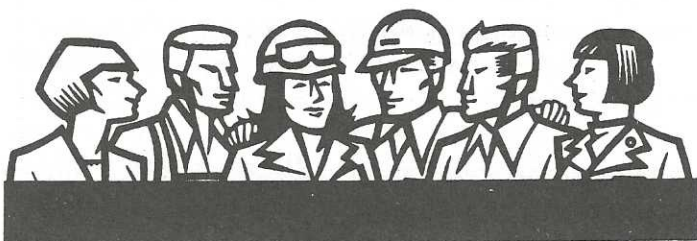
Saturday, April 11

10 A.M.—Noon

Machinists Local 653

544 W. Olive, Fresno

Call 275-1151 to confirm.



Don't let them silence working families!

The nuts and bolts of Prop. 226

Proposition 226 is an initiative written by big business and out-of-state lobbyists that would silence the voice of working families in California. Prop. 226 would make it illegal for unions to fight for their members without a complicated authorization procedure that includes a form designed by state bureaucrats to be filled out by each member, every 12 months. These regulations would tie up unions in red tape and silence our voice on issues we care about.

Prop. 226 silences working families.

Prop. 226 imposes a whole new bureaucracy on unions, so they will have to spend more time filling out forms. That means less time fighting for the things working people care about—a decent wage, health benefits, and retirement and pension benefits.

Prop. 226 violates a worker's right of confidentiality.

The initiative forces individual workers to report their political activity to their bosses. This violates workers' privacy. Employers should not be allowed to keep records on the political contributions workers make.

Prop. 226 tips the scales to Big Business.

Prop. 226 means more power to big business and less power to working people. The authors of the initiative oppose unions, Social Security, Medicare, and public schools. This initiative restricts unions but allows big business to spend corporate dollars without limit. (Big corporations don't need permission from stockholders to spend money on politics.) Big business already spends at least 11 times more on politics than unions do. If Prop. 226 passes, the playing field will be even more tilted toward big business.

Look who's behind Prop. 226.

The supporters of Prop. 226 are no friends of working families or unions. They include Pete Wilson, Newt Gingrich, and a millionaire insurance executive from Indiana. In fact, most of the initiative's backers are out-of-state lobbyists and corporations. They know Prop. 226 will shift the balance of power in favor of big business and away from working people.



The Credibility Gap

by Mike Rhodes, Labor/Community Alliance

Gap, Inc. uses sweatshop labor to manufacture its clothes. On the March 13, 1998 ABC news program *20/20*, Gap was exposed as a gross violator of human rights. The people who make the Gap's clothing line are treated like slaves. In Saipan:

- ★ Gap workers have no right to join a union.
- ★ They are not allowed religious or political freedom.
- ★ They work in horrid and filthy conditions containing extensive health and safety violations.
- ★ Pregnant workers are forced to have abortions.

Gap says its clothes are "Made in the USA." The company is able to make this claim because its sweatshops are located in Saipan, which is a U.S. territory and flies the American flag. The workers, almost all women, are brought to Saipan from China and forced to sign a shadow contract stating that they will not join a union, ask for a raise, or have children.

Inside the factory, U.S. law does not apply. There are fences around the Gap's sweatshops. Fire doors are locked shut. The women are held as virtual prisoners. Out of the 15,000 people living and working at these factories, there is not one child. Workers who have left and were interviewed by *20/20* explained that they were forced to have abortions if they became pregnant.

As readers of the *Labor/Community Alliance* Newsletter already know, Gap is locating a huge regional distribution center in Fresno. We have to ask ourselves what kind of a neighbor they will be. Will they hire local union labor to build the facility, or will they hire an out-of-town construction company using non-union workers? Is Gap coming to Fresno because the company sees us as a source of cheap labor? Do Gap executives think they can pay workers here less because of high unemployment and poverty rates?

Gap was granted tax breaks (read "corporate welfare") to move to Fresno. Its chief executive officer, Donald Fisher, is a leading backer of Prop. 226, the anti-union initiative that will be on the June ballot. The initiative would impose onerous requirements on unions, severely restricting their ability to raise and spend money on political campaigns.

Thanks to *20/20*, U.S. TV viewers now know that the Gap makes its clothes in sweatshops and has the audacity to put "Made in the USA" on its labels. This is an outrage! The next time Donald Fisher comes to town, he should be tarred and feathered.



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

April 18 Day of Action to End Sweatshops and "Free Trade"

All unionists and activists are invited to help build the April 18 Action to End Sweatshops and "Free Trade." Protesters will assemble at 1:30 P.M. in downtown San Francisco's Union Square, with music provided by a 12-piece all-women Salsa band. There will be a 2 P.M. rally featuring speakers from the labor, Latino, environmental, African-American, women's and student movements.

Invited speakers include: Ellie Smeal (NOW President), writer Alice Walker, Dave Megassy (President, National Football League Players Assoc.), Jack Henning (Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus, California Labor Federation), Frank Martin Del Campo (National Executive Board, LCLAA), a worker from Han Young (Tijuana, Mexico), and Victor Menotti (Coordinator, International Forum on Globalization). At 3 P.M. there will be a protest action at Niketown, led by the various student networks in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The April Actions Organizing Committee meets every Tuesday night at 7 P.M. at the office of Global Exchange (2017 Mission St., 3rd Floor) in San Francisco. **If you would like to help with organizing efforts**, call 415-681-5868 or 415-641-4610.

These and many other bumper stickers and buttons are available from Labor/Community Alliance.

Bumper Stickers

I love my Union
This vehicle brakes for picket lines
The Labor Movement: The folks who brought you the weekend
Friends don't let friends cross picket lines
It takes a single sweatshop to steal a childhood

Buttons

No Company Unions!
Don't Whine, Organize!
All bumper stickers and buttons are \$1 each plus \$2.50 shipping and handling per order. Inquire about discount on wholesale orders. Order from: Labor/Community Alliance, P.O. Box 5077, Fresno, CA 93755, (209)226-0477, clr2@igc.apc.org

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Calendar of Events



April 1998

Saturday, April 4

Eric Bogle Concert, 7:30 P.M., Fresno Art Museum; \$12. Sponsored by the Fresno Folklore Society. Bogle is an Australian singer/songwriter. Call 456-0453.

Sunday, April 5

Pastors for Peace Caravan, Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Call 251-3814 for details.

Saturday, April 11

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

Prop. 226 Speaker Training, 10 A.M.-Noon, Machinists Local 653, 544 W. Olive, Fresno. Call 275-1151.

Tuesday, April 14

Monthly Potluck & Discussion, 6:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Meets every second Tuesday to discuss what it means to have a personal commitment to nonviolence. Potluck at 6:30; program at 7:30.

Wednesday, April 15

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

Thursday, April 16

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

Speaking Out at Spectrum, 7:30 P.M., Spectrum Gallery, 1306 N. Wishon (see p. 6). Call 233-2221 for details.

Saturday, April 18

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.

Monday, April 20

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

Tuesday, April 21

Central California Citizens Copwatch Committee, 7 P.M., Romero Peace and Justice Center, corner of Mariposa and R Streets. Call 264-3914.

Health Care for All, 7:15 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Call 855-2438 for information.

Wednesday, April 22: EARTH DAY

Central Labor Council, 6 P.M., UFCW/SEIU offices. Call 275-1151 for details.

Friday, April 24

Coalition of Organized Labor, Noon. Call 275-1129 for location and details.

Monday, April 27

Labor/Community Alliance/Jobs with Justice, 5:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Call 226-2078.

Tuesday, April 28

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

Wednesday, April 29

Alternative Approaches to Juvenile Justice: Defining Criminal Behavior and Restorative Justice, the New Zealand Model, 7 P.M., Glendale Federal Bank, 4191 North Blackstone (corner of Ashlan). Co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters and the Fresno Branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Thursday, April 30

Charlie King Concert, 7:30 P.M., Fresno Art Museum; \$10. Sponsored by Fresno Folklore Society. King, a political-social activist as well as singer/songwriter, composed "Buy This American Car" and "Bring Back the Eight-Hour Day" (see p. 9). Call 456-0453.



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.

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.



This Month in History

April 4, 1968: Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated in Memphis.

April 9, 1898: Paul Robeson, singer/activist, born.

April 11, 1968: Civil Rights Act of 1968 becomes law.

April 15, 1960: Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) founded in Raleigh, NC.

April 20, 1914: Troops attack striking miners, killing 25, in Ludlow, Colorado.

April 29, 1915: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) founded.

Speaking out at Spectrum

Fran Peavey, author of *Heart Politics*, *A Shallow Pool of Time*, and *By Life's Grace: Musings on the Essence of Social Change*, will be speaking out at the Spectrum Gallery, 1306 N. Wishon, on Tuesday, April 16, at 7:30 P.M. Fran has worked for social change in Australia, India, South Africa, Vietnam, the former Yugoslavia and the San Francisco Bay Area. She has been working with Indian organizations, the Sankat Mochan Foundation, for 15 years, helping them in their efforts to clean up the Ganges River.

Fran invented a process she calls "Strategic Questioning" that she teaches in workshops and consultations. She leads workshops in social change, such as "How to Develop a Project from an Idea into a Reality." Fran teaches regularly at the California Institute for Integral Studies. For more than 10 years, she has also been a comedian—the Atomic Comic—mostly encouraging laughter at the various global crises we find ourselves in. Born "at a young age" in Twin Falls, Idaho, Fran loves to garden and hum. This evening of education, inspiration and serious laughter is sponsored by KFCF 88.1 FM and the Fresno Free College Foundation.



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Name _____

Union/Organization _____

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 Call 226-2078 for more information.

Metro Ministry Resource Directory Available

The *Making Connections Resource Directory* is available from Fresno Metro Ministry. This 90-page booklet lists services offered by non-profit agencies in the Fresno area. Useful for connecting those needing assistance (with health, food, legal help, etc.) with appropriate agencies and programs. Copies are \$5 (plus postage, if mailed). Call Metro at 485-1416.

Jobs with Justice Pledge

I'll be there . . .

- standing up for our rights as working people to a decent standard of living.
- supporting the right of all workers to organize and bargain collectively.
- fighting for secure family-wage jobs in the face of corporate attacks on working people and our communities.
- organizing the unorganized to take aggressive action to secure a better economic future for all of us.
- mobilizing those already organized to join the fight for jobs with justice.

During the next year, I'll be there at least five times for someone else's fight, as well as my own. If enough of us are there, we'll all start winning.

Signature _____ Date _____

Your Name (please print) _____

Union Name/Local Number or Organization _____

Home Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Area Code/Day Phone _____ Area Code/Evening Phone _____

Fax _____ E-mail _____

Labor/Community Alliance
 (Jobs with Justice)
 P.O. Box 5077
 Fresno, CA 93755
 (209) 226-2078

Reyes runs for Assembly



Sarah Reyes (center) met with SEIU Local 535 activists on Feb. 19. Left to right: Maria Herrera, Alice Standow, Reyes, Lydia Marquez, Pam Whalen. Reyes is running for the seat currently occupied by Cruz Bustamante. Photo by Howard Watkins.

The Danger in the Unz Initiative

A measure on the June ballot to end bilingual education in California, authored by Ron Unz, a Silicon Valley millionaire who has publicly admitted that he has never set foot in a bilingual education classroom, would jeopardize teachers who assist students in their home language and deny an equal education to more than a million school children.

The so-called Unz initiative (now **Prop. 227**), would subject over one million students—all at once next September—to an untested scheme. Children of all ages and all language backgrounds would be put in a single classroom all day for one year with a teacher who would be prohibited by law—under threat of a lawsuit—from teaching any of them in their own language.

Among those who lose from the Unz initiative are:

- **Parents.** Prop. 227 eliminates their right to choose. If parents do not want their child in a classroom with students of all ages whose only common denominator is a lack of English proficiency, they will have to pursue an arduous waiver procedure: after their child has been in the classroom for a month, they must petition the teacher, the principal and the district superintendent for a change.
- **Teachers.** They know the educational needs of their students cannot be met by this “one-size-fits-all” approach to education. They can be sued if they provide what they consider the most appropriate assistance to their students.
- **Students.** For students who do not successfully acquire English within the short time frame prescribed by the initiative, the imposition of an English-only education means they will effectively lose out on meaningful instruction in math, science, history and all their other subjects. As the U.S. Supreme

Court states in *Lau v. Nichols*, “students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education.”

The Unz initiative discriminates against language minorities and immigrants and has a disproportionate impact on racial minorities. The law will have a severe and detrimental impact on Latinos and Asians who make up the vast majority of limited English proficient students in the California public schools. The initiative feeds into and fortifies a climate of racism and anti-immigrant scapegoating. The Unz initiative, built on a campaign of misinformation, stereotypes and distortions of statistics and the law, is another step on the continuum of Prop. 187, Prop. 209 and the federal immigration and welfare “reforms.” ~*American Civil Liberties*

Union of Northern California 1663 Mission Street, Suite 460, San Francisco, CA 94103 (415) 621-2493

Vote for Sr. Helen

by Maria Telesco, Fresno Chapter, Death Penalty Focus

Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ, author of *Dead Man Walking* and “mother” of the abolitionist cause, has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. If she wins, the U.S. government could be pressured and shamed into abolishing the abomination that is capital punishment. International pressure on leaders and lawmakers, and the eyes of the world upon us, can make it happen! Please support Sr. Helen’s nomination by writing to:

Francis Sejersted, Chairperson
The Norwegian Nobel Committee
Dammen 19
NO255 Oslo, Norway

Letters should be short, no more than two pages. Stress why the death penalty should be abolished in the United States and worldwide, and how awarding the Peace Prize to Sister Helen could help prod U.S. leaders to rethink the death penalty and abolish it. You may include short newspaper articles about the death penalty and state in the letter if you have a connection to someone on Death Row.

It is **extremely important** that all letters be very courteous and not sound angry. Air mail to Norway is 60 cents for 1/2 ounce and \$1 for 1 ounce. The Nobel Prizes are awarded in October, so send your letter soon!

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FASTA raises substitutes' spirits

by Shirley Kirsten, FASTA President

The self-esteem of Fresno substitute teachers is soaring as they greet each other in school cafeterias throughout the district. The noticeable shift in mood among subs seems to be related to the timely birth of the Fresno Area Substitute Teachers Association, also known as FASTA. In just five months this fledgling organization has managed to acquire hundreds of petition signatures that affirm its authorization to be the exclusive bargaining rep for Fresno Unified substitute teachers.

This flurry of union activity has drawn the attention of subs as far East as Boston, Mass. who have "linked" up with Fresno subs by way of a FASTA website. (<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Oracle/4802/index.html>)

The Fresno Unified School District has for too long paid subs a meager \$65 per day, while contracted teachers enjoy periodic, incremental raises. This painful inequity has sent Fresno subs scurrying off to the neighboring districts of Clovis and Central where the daily wage increases by 22 percent. That is why FASTA takes the uncompromising position that the FUSD must achieve parity for subs in the Central Valley and raise subs' pay to at least \$80 per day. (As of July 1998 subs will obtain only a \$5 daily increase.)

FASTA also stands firmly in support of its platform to obtain health benefits for subs; to acquire due process in the substitute teacher evaluation process; to give substitutes access to professional development resources; to end discrimination against subs in the granting of contracts; and to have substitute teacher pay reflect training, experience and seniority.

C-POST Affiliation

Fresno Area Substitute Teachers Association is proud to be affiliated with C-Post, California Project Organizing Substitute Teachers, a "network of substitute teacher organizations, substitute and visiting teachers and other educators from throughout California." C-POST is "dedicated to the improvement of wages and working conditions for California substitute teachers, and to the professional development and improvement of the substitute teaching workforce." Warren Fletcher is C-POST's able Founder/Coordinator and brings unparalleled organizing acumen to the Central Valley and beyond. He's been at the helm of UTLA's Substitute Teacher Division for ten years and is committed to help subs all over the state achieve the pay, respect and dignity that should be accorded all educators.

FASTA's membership rally at Hoover High

FASTA made its official public debut in the Hoover High School cafeteria on March 2, 1998. It was a successful organizing and media event aimed at exposing substitute teacher issues that had been ignored for as long as subs themselves had chosen to remain silent. The FASTA President and C-POST organizer were

FASTA President Shirley Kirsten's labor intensity springs from her family, which has an organizing history dating back to 1927. Shirley's paternal grandfather, Morris Taft, called for a general strike referendum among "tuckers, pleaters, and hemstitchers." For this behavior, Taft was served with an Injunctive Order, defended himself as his own attorney, and succeeded in having the Court's action withdrawn.

Shirley's own mother, Jessie Taft, organized laundry workers in 1927, chained herself to a Taft Hotel pillar in midtown Manhattan hotel and protested the unfair labor practices of the Sutton Superior Laundry. Today, at 83, she is pounding the pavements in NYC, supporting Tenants Rights in the face of greedy landlord lobbyists. The late Carl Smith, Shirley Kirsten's father, was a union rep for the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen and became its legislative liaison to the State Assembly. Russell Smith, Kirsten's older brother, a labor organizer for the United Auto Workers Union, recently ran for elected office.

Shirley Kirsten combines her labor activism with a piano teaching, performing career. A graduate of NYC's H.S. of Performing Arts (FAME), Oberlin Conservatory and New York University, she gives benefit concerts for causes she believes in: Hospice, Central Valley AIDS, Recovery For Emotionally Abused Children, among others. The mother of "six closely spaced children," Shirley hopes one of them will follow in the family's footsteps and "help make the world better by helping to obtain fair and equitable wages, working conditions for its labor force."

keynote speakers, but Fresno subs really stole the show by passing the mike around, sharing gut-wrenching accounts of subhuman, substandard, substitute teacher pay and working conditions, shocking the public with disclosures that reflect poorly on standards of education in the Central Valley. Still, it was a dignified forum for pent-up subs who succeeded in awakening the public to long-suppressed issues that affect the quality of education in this community and beyond.

Following the event, Shirley and Warren, along with Tom Smith and Nancy Golbek, headed over to radio station KAAT 103.1 at the invitation of Marc Scalzo to bombard the airwaves and inspire subs throughout the Valley to collectively organize.

Abuse of "Thirty-Day" Subs

One glaring inequity exposed at the Hoover High Rally was the district's use of 30-day subs in a "rolling" sequence, so that teacher "vacancies" are not promptly filled by permanent teacher candidates, but kept indefinitely "unfilled." This practice has dire consequences for FUSD students. It disturbs educational continuity and interferes with the student/teacher bonding process. The use of the "rolling 30s" is a glaring cost-saving measure that saves the district a few dollars while seriously compromising educational standards.

(cont. on page 9)

FASTA, cont. from page 8

FASTA's Future

FASTA now faces the challenge of obtaining the signatures of 50 percent plus one of its official substitute pool in order to be the exclusive rep for subs in collective bargaining with the Fresno Unified School District. If it achieves its numerical goal, then FUSD can still demand an election where 50 percent of voting subs must affirm FASTA's representation by ballot. The road to achieving this goal of representation is paved with problems that we hope are surmountable. You can reach FASTA at: 2037 W. Bullard, #202, Fresno, CA 93711, or by calling 435-5715.

Charlie King Concert

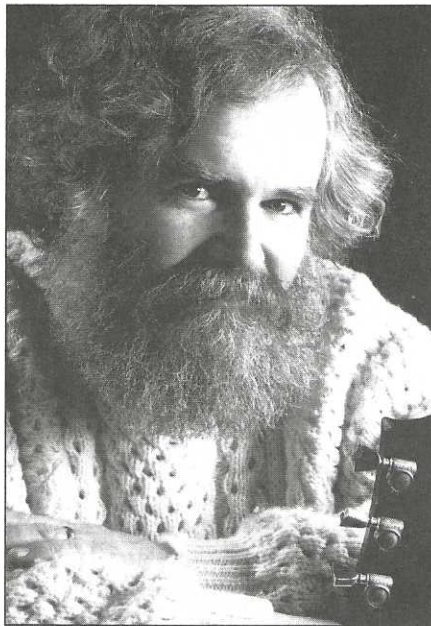
**Thursday,
April 30**

7:30 P.M.

*Fresno Art
Museum*

\$10

Call 456-0453



Bring Back the Eight-Hour Day

by Charlie King

Say you work at a white-collar job
You're paid at a fixed monthly rate
But you come in for meetings a half hour early
You're working a full hour late
Then you sit for an hour in traffic
With the rest of the overtime drones
There's a latchkey kid you must chase off the bed
For you eat a cold supper alone.

CHORUS:

So, bring back the eight-hour day
When did we give it away?
There's so much to do
When the work day is through
Oh, bring back the eight-hour day.

They've got cellular phones for your car
They've got notebook PCs for your lap
When you crawl off to sleep you stay close to your beeper
Now why do we stand for that crap?
They tell us we have to compete
No, we're tired of footing the bill
Eight hours for work, eight hours for rest,
Eight hours for what we will.

Labor News

Peter, Paul, Mary & Strawberry Workers. Legendary folk singers and long-time activists Peter, Paul and Mary performed a benefit concert to support the California strawberry workers' fight to organize under the Farm Workers' banner. The March 19 concert at the Santa Cruz Auditorium also marked the thirtieth anniversary of the trio's Carnegie Hall concert that raised funds and support for the late UFW President Cesar Chavez and the union's drive to organize California grape workers. The three met with strawberry workers—in the fields and at their homes—and joined a noon rally at UFW's Watsonville headquarters.

Union Summer heats up for '98. Now in its third year, Union Summer brings together students, workers and other activists in communities across the nation to fight for workers' rights and social and economic justice. The four-week educational internships run throughout the summer; sites will be announced in early May. Applications are now available; the deadline is June 1. (Applicants must be at least 18 years old. Those who participated in 1996 or 1997 are not eligible to apply.) For application information, call 1-800-952-2550; fax 202-639-6264; e-mail unionsmr@aol.com; or mail to Union Summer, 815 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

Labor Educators' Conference. *Organizing for Keeps: Building a Twenty-first Century Labor Movement* is in the spotlight of the National Education Conference April 30–May 2 in San Jose. The conference is sponsored by the AFL-CIO Education Department and the University and College Labor Education Association. It will focus on developing rank-and-file leaders' skills—from organizing and bargaining to mobilizing members and forging community alliances. The conference is open to all union and university labor educators, union activists and others committed to revitalizing the labor movement. For details, contact Tony Sarmiento at 202-637-5144, or send e-mail to tsarmien@aflcio.org.

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Steel workers target Wells Fargo

by Larry Langford, Labor/Community Alliance

The United Steelworkers of America (USWA) has found a novel way to combat unfair labor practices by companies determined to resist the right of workers to strike: They take it to the bank. In an attempt to force the Portland-based Oregon Steel Mills to stop its union-breaking tactics and to observe labor law, the USWA has initiated a boycott of Wells Fargo Bank, one of Oregon Steel's major financial backers. The steelworkers hope that by bringing bank customers and shareholders into this dispute, pressure can be brought on the company to resolve its differences with the union.

The trouble began on Oct. 3, 1997, at one of Oregon Steel's subsidiary plants, CF&I, in Pueblo, Colorado. When their labor contract expired, about 1,100 workers at CF&I went on strike, and the company retaliated by hiring 600 permanent replacement workers. On Dec. 30, workers at the plant made an unconditional offer to end the strike, thereby forcing the company either to re-hire the striking workers or to retain the replacements and risk fines of up to \$600,000 a week. In an effort to break the union, CF&I/Oregon Steel has chosen the latter course and to date has recalled only 30 of the striking workers.

The USWA then changed tactics and decided that rather than trying to defeat Oregon Steel in a head-on confrontation, it would fight the company indirectly by putting pressure on its creditors, an approach that had already been successfully used to settle strikes against Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel and Bridgestone/Firestone. So last November the union began asking its members, as well as other unions in eight western states, to participate in a **consumer boycott of Wells Fargo Bank.**

According to the union, Wells Fargo is, in effect, bankrolling Oregon Steel's union-busting strategy by loaning it working capital. Individuals and organizations are being urged to withdraw checking and savings accounts, safe deposits, investments, and credit card accounts from the bank as a way to persuade it to influence the steel company to end its opposition to the union.

Union officials have been pleased with the response to the boycott. According to the USWA, unions and individuals in the Los Angeles area have withdrawn more than \$10 million from the bank, and there has been a series of demonstrations in support of the striking workers and the boycott.

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