

Labor/Community ALLIANCE

© SunMt all rights reserved photo: George Elfie Ballis

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 11



NOVEMBER 1999

ST. BENEDICT CATHOLIC WORKER TO HOST EVENT ON EL SALVADOR

by Lisa Apper

For the past two years, the St. Benedict Catholic Worker has fed people in front of Fresno County Jail: the homeless, the working poor, those released from Fresno County Jail and those visiting prisoners there. "To feed the hungry," is part of the Catholic Worker vocation. It was Dorothy Day's vision, as a founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, that every Catholic Worker House takes up Jesus' challenge in Matthew 25. Dorothy wrote about this saying: "No one asked us to do this work. The mayor of the city did not come along and ask us to run a bread line or a hospice to supplement the municipal lodging house. Nor did the Bishop or Cardinal ask that we help out the Catholic Charities in their endeavor to help the poor. No one asked us to start an agency or institution of any kind. On our responsibility, because we are our brother's keeper, because of a sense of personal responsibility, we began to try to see Christ in each one that came to us."

If a man came in hungry, there was always something in the icebox. If he needed a bed and we were crowded, there was always a quarter around to buy a bed on the Bowery. If he needed clothes, there were our friends to be appealed to, after we had taken the extra coat out of the closet first, of course. It might be someone else's coat but that was all right, too.

Yet Dorothy saw that Catholic Workers are also called to be prophetic voices, speaking out when life is denied, in any

Continued on page 3

SHUT DOWN 'THE SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS'

by Vanessa Rhodes

The School of the Americas is widely known by political activists to be connected with torture and repression in Latin America. The US Army School of Americas, based in Fort Benning, Georgia, trains Latin American soldiers in combat, counter-insurgency, and counter-narcotics. Graduates of the SOA have been responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses in Latin America. Among the SOA's nearly 60,000 graduates are notorious dictators Leopoldo Galtieri and Roberto Viola of Argentina, Juan Velasco Alvarado of Peru, Guillermo Rodriguez from Ecuador, and Hugo Banzer Suarez of Bolivia. Low-level SOA graduates have participated in human rights abuses that include the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero and the El Mozote Massacre of 900 civilians. On November 19th Fresno will be taking an active role against the abuses of the School of the Americas. At 11 AM there will be a civil disobedience action held in front of the Federal Building (Downtown Fresno), protesting the School of Americas. The protest is expected to lead to arrests. Community support is sought, if you are interested in more information please call Liza Apper at 229-6410.



photo by Mike Rhodes

Support Mumia Abu-Jamal! Rally every Saturday 3 p.m.,
Shaw and Blackstone in Fresno (see story on page 15)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Center for Nonviolence & The Welch Report . .	4
November Calendar of Events	6
Immigrant Rights articles	5 & 7
Valley Labor Chatter	8-9
Living Wage Campaign	9
Police Brutality	11
<i>Dream What We Can Become and Rejoice:</i>	
Book Reviews	13
The Multilateral Agreement on Investment	14

LABOR/COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

The Labor/Community Alliance is independent and dedicated to building a coalition of organized labor and progressive community groups to pursue economic and social justice for working people in Fresno and the Central San Joaquin Valley. The Labor/Community Alliance is affiliated nationally with Jobs with Justice. This newsletter is published monthly.

Editor: Mike Rhodes

Editorial Board Members:

Bob Baker, Phyllis Fess Baker,

Nancy Marsh, Myrna Martinez Nateras

Jeffrey Paris, Diane Scott,

Richard Stone, James Todd, Pam Whalen

LABOR/COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

P.O. Box 5077

Fresno, CA 93755

(559)226-0477/226-3962 (fax)

E-mail: clr2@igc.apc.org

www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Congress/1885/

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Last year, representing the Central California Alliance, I was invited to participate in a workshop designed to promote dialogue between groups in Fresno. I will be forever grateful to whoever placed my name on the list.

Held at the Sierra Vista United Methodist church, and facilitated by a man from San Francisco, the day-long event introduced me to Food Not Bombs (they provided the wonderful lunch), Mike Rhodes, from the Labor/Community Alliance, and provided time for bonding with many people dedicated to improving life in Fresno.

The Central California Alliance is a gay and lesbian organization that began as a business and professional association but has evolved and now is devoted to "promoting positive change through addressing community needs, that all people will have equal rights, access and/or opportunity."

I am so grateful to Labor/Community Alliance for raising my awareness of the many opportunities and the need for solidarity in Fresno. I was moved, recently, to represent Central California Alliance and Wesley United Methodist Church in support of the Carpenters' Union as hundreds marched through residential construction sites in North Fresno.

There is still much work to be done. At the recent "Stop The Hate" rally at CSUF, the University president, the student body president and Congressman Radanovich's aide spoke about tolerance and understanding for all races, cultures, and religions, but there was no mention of the 11 murders in the USA last year directed at sexual minorities. (The most visible being Matthew Sheppard.) I was shocked that such an omission would take place at an institution of higher learning.

Robin L. Greiner, Jr.



DREAM WHAT WE CAN BECOME AND REJOICE SOÑAR LO QUE PODAMOS SER Y GOZAR

This poster, 2'X3' - \$13 incl tax, ship

..

also

**106 stunning photos of farm worker conditions
& organizing on 18 panels, heavy card stock,
11"X17" spiral-bound, this poster is cover -
\$18 incl tax, ship**

Send checks to SunMt
35751 Oak Springs
Tollhouse, CA 93667
(209)855-3710

All proceeds to demonstration passive solar straw bale-
adobe dwelling on SunMt in cooperation with the
United Farm Workers Union

Subscribe to Labor/Community Alliance today!

- ☐ Yes! Send me *Labor/Community Alliance* every month.
- ☐ Yearly rate (circle one): \$35, \$20, \$10 - low income.
- ☐ Hardship? Contact us. We'll arrange something!
- ☐ Sustaining: \$10 per month (our foundation).
- ☐ Yes! I will help distribute L/CA. Send me a bundle.
- ☐ Yes! Put me 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 _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone: Home _____ Work _____
Fax _____ E-Mail _____

Mail this form to:

Labor/Community Alliance
P.O. Box 5077, Fresno, CA 93755
Call 226-0477 for more information.

St. Benedict Workers/El Salvador, Continued from page 1

form and in any way, and to any human being. Catholic Workers not only feed the poor but ask why they are poor. Catholic Workers oppose all injustice that denies life. During the 1950's when air raid drills were regularly conducted in New York City, the Catholic Worker opposed them on the grounds that these drills supported the Cold War myth of reliance on nuclear weapons to secure our future. Dorothy and the Catholic Workers were arrested numerous times for refusal to obey the drills. Many people thought Dorothy's protest was futile. Dorothy wrote: "It is a gesture, perhaps, but a necessary one. Silence means consent, and we cannot consent to the militarization of our country without protest. Since we believe that air raid drills are part of a calculated plan to inspire fear of the enemy, instead of the love which Jesus Christ told us we should feel, we must protest these drills. It is an opportunity to show we mean what we write when we repeat over and over that we are put here on this earth to love God and our neighbor."

That is why on November 17th the St. Benedict Catholic Worker is organizing **"Fullness of Life,"** an evening dedicated to remembering with prayer, education, and action the 10th anniversary of the murders of the six Jesuits and their housekeeper and her daughter at the University of Central America in El Salvador.

On November 17 the *"Fullness of Life"* event will begin at 5:15 pm. with Mass at St. John's Cathedral followed by a simple supper and showing of the movie, *"A Question of Conscience"* (a 47 minute film on the Jesuit murders). The event will conclude with a candlelight walk to, and vigil at, the Federal Building, urging the closing of 'The School of the Americas'.

The St. Benedict Catholic Worker has, for two years, fed our brothers and sisters in front of Fresno County Jail. We have seen the face of poverty and know it. We know that this is the same kind of poverty our brothers and sisters in El Salvador experience. We know it is the United States' military budget that is killing us domestically and murdering our brothers and sisters in other countries. It is OUR military, at 'The School of the Americas', that trains the military from Latin countries to keep their people poor and in fear. The poor continue to suffer and those who rise in their defense are killed, as in the case of the Jesuits. And it is the millions of dollars we spend on maintaining places like 'The School of the Americas' that keep our people poor. These are the people we serve on our soup line who live without housing, employment, decent medical care or enough to eat.

On November 17 we will be remembering the 10th anniversary of those brave men and women whose voices cried out for the voiceless - the poor. Juan Ramon Moreno



Pardo, S.J., Segundo Montes Mozo, S.J., Amando Lopez Quintana, S.J., Joaquin Lopez Y Lopez, S.J., Ignacio Martin Baro, S.J., Ignacio Ellacuria, S.J., Elba Julia Ramos and Celina Maricet Ramos will be forever in our memory. On November 17th we at the St. Benedict Catholic Worker hope that those who come to this event will take that memory and live it out in the day to day struggle for justice.

"When I feed the hungry they call me a saint, when I ask why they are hungry they call me a communist".

----Dom Helder Camara Bishop of Recife, Brazil

"All this blood of martyrs spilled in El Salvador and throughout Latin America, far from bringing discouragement or despair, inspires a new spirit of struggle and new hope in our people. In this sense if we are not a "new world" nor a "new continent" at least we are clearly and verifiably—if perhaps not by those from beyond our shores—a continent of hope. And this is a particularly interesting symptom of something that may be new in the future, different from other continents that have no hope, as all they really have is fear." —Ignacio Ellacuria, SJ

'PASTORS FOR PEACE' COMES TO FRESNO

by Vanessa Rhodes

Carrying out their 31st caravan, Pastors for Peace will be cruzin' through Fresno on November 19th. This caravan for self-determination is headed to Nicaragua and Honduras to deliver supplies to areas in need. En route to delivering urgently needed material aid, caravans travel to hundreds of communities throughout the U.S. to raise awareness about the effects of U.S. foreign policy on the peoples of Central America.

The caravans demonstrate the *"People's Foreign Policy,"* which aims to support self-determination and sustainable development. In both Nicaragua and Honduras, the caravan will deliver urgently needed material aid and meet with indigenous, Garifuna (Afro-Honduran and Afro-Nicaraguan) and campesino communities, as well as Non Governmental Organizations (NGO's) which are working in support of human rights, land rights, dignity and equality.

One focus of the 31st Pastors for Peace caravan is to shut down the School of Americas. The Pastors for Peace will be participating in a local protest to stop the School of Americas, sponsored by the Saint Benedict Catholic Workers. This event will take place in front of the downtown Fresno Federal Building at 11 a.m. on November 19th. The Fresno Center for Non-violence is sponsoring the Pastors for Peace Caravan and will be holding an event that evening to show support for their humanitarian work. There will be a potluck the evening of the 19th at 6 p.m. and a program held at 7 p.m.. The event will be held at Saint Mary's Church, 4636 W Dakota. For more information call Gerry Bill at 227-2133.

FRESNO CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE

Center Report: November 1999

by Richard Stone

CENTRAL VALLEY INSTITUTE: The Center has adopted the CVI as an official project under the directorship of Vincent Lavery and Jacqueline Elliot. The Institute will compile a roster of experts on various issues to provide media with input from a progressive perspective. The Institute will also sponsor forums and guest speakers. Vince and Jackie are now contacting organization and individuals, soliciting suggestions for its "fellows". (Self-referrals are welcome.) Vince can be reached at 439-0821.

THE BEE, CONTINUED: The importance of a presence like the CVI was evident following a meeting we arranged with Charlie Water, Executive Editor of *The Bee*. Our contingent (including Ellie Bluestein, Jean Kennedy Douglas, Rev. Bob Baker and Robin Greiner) was seeking to understand *The Bee's* failure to acknowledge the presence of a progressive coalitional presence (manifest in entities like the Center, the Labor/Community Alliance and the Interfaith Alliance), and to report on local connections to national issues (sanctions on Iraq and Cuba, Mumia Abu-Jamal, etc.). Mr. Waters was pretty much unaware of our existence, but was welcoming and he did acknowledge we were "an under-served population." He invited us to use him as an "ear"—sending him press releases and messages to insure our events and stances are known; but he made clear he would not be an advocate. The new regime did not get off to a smooth start, however, as the following day *The Bee* failed to cover the KFCF banquet with several hundred people in attendance and a first-hand report on the then-hot topic of East Timor given by national correspondent Amy Goodman.

HAVING SAID THAT: Just prior to print of this Report, I was notified by *The Bee* that my article for *Valley Voices* (regarding the above) is to be printed. Watch for my mug shot!

2ND TUESDAY: Potluck 6:30 p.m., Program 7:30 p.m..
On **November 9th** the program will be "ALTERNATIVE VETERANS DAY; Honoring casualties of war—military and civilian". On **Dec. 14th**, Kehinde Solwazi will be discussing "What Kwanzaa is...and why"

UNICEF CARDS: Holiday cards, note cards and calendars are available again. Contact Angela Price at 435-6383.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY: The yard sale was a great success, netting over \$900. Thanks to all who donated items and/or worked with pricing, setting up and sales. Special thanks to the Community Link Youth Group volunteers for their assistance on Friday. Next up—the annual **Phone-a-thon**. Want to help with calls? Contact Angela, 435-6383.

TREASURER POSITION still open—\$50 per month stipend, not too much work!

The Welch Report 13 October 1999

by Jack H. Welch, M.D.

Progressives, in the face of the Reagan and Gingrich "revolutions", have given much ground in terms of the spectrum of national policy debate. From a consensus for single payer health care they have fallen back to quibbling over half measures to keep corporate health care in line. From a strong position for disarmament treaties and the elimination of nuclear weapons they watch as Star Wars is reactivated and nuclear development expands under cover of the "stewardship" programs at Livermore and elsewhere.

Isn't it time the national debate be pushed back where it belongs into a consensus for a sane, non-violent world, which uses its resources wisely to support the survival and well-being of the planet? To these ends, consider the following **MILLENNIAL MANIFESTO**:

1. **Abolish War and Nuclear Weapons:** follow through on Abolition 2000 initiatives and Beyond War concepts — war must go the way of slavery and be abandoned as an institution. Give the UN Security Council the power to be the counterweight to regional threats to peace.
2. **Eliminate Poverty:** a global commitment to feed, clothe and house the needy of the world.
3. **Campaign Reform:** free the elective process from the power of the corporations.
4. **Universal Health Care:** Single Payer health care, or other, which guarantees comprehensive health care to all residents.
5. **Workers' Rights:** right to organize, improve working conditions, and off-set effects of globalization of the economy.
6. **Quality Education:** to which equal access is assured.
7. **Crime/Violence Prevention:** massive national effort toward programs to divert kids from drugs, gangs and crime.
8. **End Corporate Welfare and Greed:** end massive subsidies of corporations.
9. **Toward a Healthy Eco-system and a Sustainable World:** develop and enforce environmental standards based on health science and not on industrial profit needs.
10. **Equal Rights Issues:** return to proactively addressing inequities in housing, income and education based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation. (*San Jose Peace Times*, Sept. '99)

I learned recently that civilian casualties in war at beginning of the 20th Century were 15% of total casualties; by the end of the century they had become 90% of total casualties!

Since Indonesia illegally occupied East Timor in 1975, the US government has approved sales of over \$1b in US weaponry to the regime in Jakarta (\$148m of this since 1993). There is no doubt that the recent reign of terror in East Timor has been conducted in part with US weaponry. The US has a special responsibility therefore to help stop the killing through the UN protection force now in place. (*Peace Action*, Sept. 25, '99)

One of the major political parties frequently expresses its opposition to "big government". Big government is this: "The military establishment issues over half of all government paychecks. It makes about two-thirds of government purchases of goods and services, and sponsors 53% of all government research and development. It is the nation's second largest health care provider... Outside of China, it is without rival as the world's largest bureaucracy." (*Peace Action*, Sept. '99)



DRIVERLESS TRACTORS – DEADLY MENACE IN THE FIELDS

by Mary Jo McConahay

EDITOR'S NOTE: Among the many hazards facing workers in California's \$27 billion agricultural industry is a practice which has apparently escaped public attention, yet accounts for a significant number of deaths and injuries every year. Use of a tractor without a driver saves money, but puts everyone in the field at risk. Mary Jo McConahay is an editor of **New California Media Online**, a collaboration of ethnic news media which hosts the first multi-ethnic portal on the Internet at www.NCMOnline.com.

MENDOTA, CA. The clearing morning mist reveals an astonishing sight – moving tractors with no one at the wheel, crawling among hundreds of stooped workers. This is illegal, causes dozens of injuries and fatalities each year, yet remains common practice here in California's Central Valley, the richest agricultural region in the world.

The tractors pull flat-bed trailers and platforms which farmworkers load with fruit and vegetables, the stuff of the state's \$27 billion farm industry. Workers labor on, around, and sometimes in front of the advancing vehicle.

"I was picking broccoli about 9:30 in the morning when I saw the foreman reach in and accelerate the tractor so it would move faster," remembers Aurelio Eligio Julian of Soledad. Julian, 31, slipped and fell flat in the mud, watching the tractor bear down on him. "I said to myself, 'I am lost,' then I said, 'No, I can get most of my body out.'" Julian and a companion screamed "for a minute" until someone stopped the tractor. He escaped with an injured foot that has cost him months of work.

Julian was fortunate. Government inspectors report workers have died from slipping under wheels, or being squeezed between tractor and trailer, when no one was at the controls. Farmworker advocates tell of family members calling out helplessly when loved ones were run over. Often victims are drivers themselves, told to jump on and off the tractor to perform additional tasks.

These dangers are well recognized. California law forbids abandoning the wheel. The Chicago-based Equipment Manufacturers Institute, which includes the nation's major tractor companies, has written to the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (CAL-OSHA) Standards Board to say that mounting and dismounting "should never be permitted," and even remote controls should be forbidden "in the interest of worker safety."

CAL-OSHA has levied fines in some cases, but they are small (from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars) and thinly spread. California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) attorneys have successfully taken at least two growers to court.

Violators are hard to catch. On one recent day while traveling with CRLA community worker Ephraim Camacho, driverless tractors were as evident as those properly manned. Set in "creeper gear," they crawl steadily down furrows at speeds from a half mile to two miles an hour. "I'm going to have to go in and tell them they're in violation," Camacho said. He carefully noted the location of offending fields and occasionally pulled

out a cellular telephone to notify CAL-OSHA. "This is the fourth time I've reported this field," he said once.

Ruefully, Camacho admitted that a foreman or grower who sees fields being observed can simply tell a worker to board the tractor.

Another ruse is to place a child at the wheel to make it seem from afar that the tractor is manned. Nevertheless, farmworker advocates have made videotapes of driverless tractors to back up observations, and many report a good working relationship with CAL-OSHA.

For the past year, a group of some 40 growers has been petitioning for an exception to the safety law, which would make their driverless tractors legal. They propose using a kill switch at ground level, with an operator no more than ten feet away.

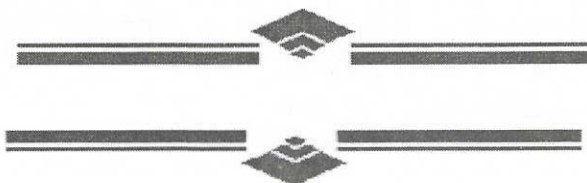
Richard Quandt, an attorney who represents the growers, argues the device is better than keeping bored drivers at the wheel. "In many cases it's a misnomer to say they're driving at all, because they're dozing off, and would not be useful in an emergency," said Quandt.

But critics say fatigue should be met with rotating shifts, and a kill switch won't protect a dismounting driver from slipping on mud, or crop debris. An agricultural machine design expert, Dr. William E. Steinke of the University of California at Davis, says a tractor could travel almost 12 feet before an operator could hit the switch, and CAL-OSHA

inspectors opposed the growers' request last year in a letter to the Board.

Farmworker advocates reckon fatalities may be a dozen per year, disabling accidents many more, but OSHA only investigates accidents reported or those found from sources such as county coroners.

Farmworkers often do not report incidents because they fear reprisals. On a dirt track between two green expanses of baby lima beans, irrigator Roberto B. displays a forearm cross-hatched with red cuts. He said the scratches came from a driverless tractor that lurched in his direction as he worked. Roberto, 45, asked that his full real name not be used. Months before, he was thrown from a tractor platform and broke four ribs when the distracted driver hit a bump. "The company doctor sent me back to the fields right away with a note to the grower, saying I could do light work," he said. He did not report the accident out of fear of "venganza," he said, ill will on his employer's part.



Calendar of Events **November 1999**

Tuesday, November 2, 5 PM

LAS CRUCES: A CALL TO ACTION. You are invited to join in "Las Cruces" to create an exhibition of 300 white crosses at Centro Bellas Artes, celebrated as *"Día de los Muertos"*. See article on page 12. For more information call: M. Gloria Hernández at (559) 497-0833 or email: iwapgh@aol.com.

Thursday, November 4

CALL TO ACTION: Support the Zapatista communities in resistance. Oppose the expansion of NAFTA. In light of intensifying militarization in Chiapas, Action for Community & Ecology in the Rainforests of Central America (ACERCA), with the support of the Mexico Solidarity Network, is calling for an International Day of Action in support of the Zapatista communities in resistance on November 4, 1999. For more information contact: ACERCA, POB 57, Burlington, VT 05402 (802)863-0571 (802) 864-8203 Fax Email: acerca@sover.net <http://www.acerca.org>.

Saturday, November 6, 9 AM

The JFK club of the San Joaquin honors President Kennedy. Dan Garst, CSUF political science instructor will present *"The Legacy of President JFK - The rest of the story"*. The meeting will be held at the Democratic Party Office, 255 N Fulton. For more info call Ray Ensher 439-8140.

Saturday, November 6

Rally to support Cesar Chavez holiday in California. Join Dolores Huerta, Senator Richard Polanco, SEIU 1000, UFCW 770 and 10,000 petition signers in demanding recognition of Chavez' birthday, March 31, as an official state holiday. Noon, La Placita Olvera, Los Angeles. UFW Community Committee. Call (323) 221-9128 or Email: EvmAlarcon@aol.com for more information.

Tuesday, November 9, 6:30 PM Potluck and 7:30 PM Program

Second Tuesday at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness. Alternative Veterans Day commemoration. *"Honoring Casualties of War, Civilian and Military"* will be the program. Presentations will include Grandparents' Voices: Southeast Asian refugee elders speak of their lives and local artist Robert Ogata on Japanese Internment camps. Call 237-3223 or email: fcnv2@juno.com for more information.

Saturday, November 13

Fresno Center for Nonviolence monthly board meeting. Call 237-3223 or email: fcnv2@juno.com for more information.

Monday, November 15

Deadline for submissions for the December issue of the Labor/Community Alliance Newsletter. Call 226-0477 or email: clr2@igc.org.

Monday, November 15, 7:30 PM

Amnesty International Group 264 will meet at the Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness. Call 224-0924

Wednesday, November 17, 5:15 PM

St Benedict Catholic Worker event remembering the 10th anniversary of the Martyrs of the University of Central America in El Salvador. Mass at St John's Cathedral followed by Dinner, a presentation and candlelight march to the Federal Building (see story on page 1). Call 229-6410 or email: PaxOSB@aol.com.

Thursday, November 18, 6 PM

Meeting of MAPA (Mexican American Political Association) Fresno at Arte Americas, 1630 Van Ness. For more information call 485-4707 or 252-3330.

Thursday November 18, 7:30 PM

Death Penalty Focus meeting at the Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness.

Friday, November 19, 6:30 PM Potluck and 7:30 PM program

Pastors for Peace Caravan to Honduras and Nicaragua (see story on page 3). The event will be held at Saint Mary's 4636 W. Dakota. For more information contact Gerry Bill at 227- 2133 or email: zaygb@csufresno.edu.

Saturday, November 20, 10:00 AM

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom general meeting at the Center for Nonviolence. Election of new board will take place. Plans for December Holiday Fair.

Saturday, November 20, 7:30 PM

U. Utah Phillips, folk humorist, political anarchist, iconoclast, singer, songwriter, storyteller at the Fresno Art Museum in a benefit for KFCF 88.1 FM. Tickets are \$20. For more information call 431-3653 or 294-8028

November 19-21

California Labor Federation campaign school for political organizers. (916) 444-3676.

Friday, November 26, 5 PM

Street Heat on KFCF 88.1 FM. Featuring Labor and community activists.

Monday, November 29, 6:30 PM

Labor/Community Alliance monthly meeting at 985 N Van Ness.

Tuesday, November 30

March and Rally at the opening day of the World Trade Organization meeting, Seattle.

December 11

SAVE THIS DATE FOR ANNUAL WILPF HOLIDAY FAIR
FEATURING ITEMS FROM LOCAL PEACE AND JUSTICE
GROUPS, UNICEF, ETC. Groups wishing to take part in the fair should contact Jean Kennedy Douglas (291-4948) or Janet Capella (227-7176).

EMAIL: CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Labor/Community Alliance produces an updated Calendar of Events every week which is available by email. If you would like to receive the latest information about progressive events in the Fresno area send a message saying that you would like to join to clr2@igc.apc.org and we will add you to the list. In addition to the weekly calendar you will also receive "action alerts" when there is an emergency rally or demonstration. This service is free. Here is what our readers have to say about This Week in Fresno:

"I can not tell you what a thrill it is to see your site expand and be available to such a diverse group of activities....as a person who wishes I could participate in ALL of the wonderful activities that are going on in Fresno, now I can just tell you thanks for being here and making this site a community project...you do good work."

Jim Compton-Schmidt...

"Thanks for your weekly publication on events in Fresno; I read it from top to bottom and even go to some of the events. It's an important link to like minded people. Thanks for your work."

Carla Jo Dakin

NIBCO CASE GOES TO COURT

by Phil Erro

Latino and Southeast Asian immigrants fired by Fresno irrigation component manufacturer NIBCO in 1998 have filed a class action suit against that company and its successor R.M. Wade & Co., alleging that NIBCO fired them because of their lack of English proficiency. The suit, filed on October 1, 1999, follows on the heels of a complaint filed in March by the Language Rights Project with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency assigned the responsibility to investigate employment discrimination complaints (see L/CA, May 1999). The Language Rights Project—a joint undertaking of the Employment Law Center and the Northern California American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)—charged that NIBCO violated U.S. and California civil rights laws that prohibit employment discrimination based on national origin. The unemployment benefits of many of the fired workers had already run out by May; several fired workers had children forced to drop out of college for lack of financial support, while others defaulted on mortgage payments and lost their homes. Neither NIBCO nor R.M. Wade took corrective action in response to the March complaint by the Language Rights Project, prompting the plaintiffs to file the employment discrimination suit.

The class action suit filed on October 1, 1999 reveals that immigrant workers who failed the written English tests in late 1997 and early 1998 were demoted to inferior jobs and were told that they would get raises only when they attained proficiency in English. Between July 30 and September 24, 1998, according to suit documents, NIBCO terminated dozens of Latino and Southeast Asian employees, claiming that there was a lack of work at its Fresno plant. At the same time, however, NIBCO sought other workers to do the same work. Additionally, the suit states that NIBCO's successor R.M. Wade has since rehired four of the "laid off" immigrants at lower wages and has hired five of them through a local personnel agency at lower wages with no benefits.

The prospects of a victory for the fired immigrant workers are probably better than 50-50. The federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act clearly prohibit employment discrimination based on race or national origin. When a worker is not allowed to speak her primary language or is required to speak English without an accent, this is considered discrimination based on national origin. Immigrant workers have won lawsuits in recent years in cases in which it was proved that the employer discriminated against them based on their inability to speak easily unjudged that NIBCO fired workers because of their Laotian, Vietnamese, or Mexican accent and thereby discriminated against them based on their national origin? Read future issues of the Labor/Community Alliance newsletter to find out!



UFW GRAPE BOYCOTT UPDATE

"The first principal of non-violent action is that of non-cooperation with everything humiliating."

Cesar Chavez spoke those words more than 30 years ago while the United Farm Workers was in the midst of the first table grape boycott. It was a hard and bitter struggle. Yet, Cesar was convinced that non-violent action was the only way to ensure victory.

He was right. Thanks to that first grape boycott, farm workers won union contracts that ensured decent wages, medical care, a pension plan, even fresh drinking water and clean toilets in the fields.

Labor laws have gone unenforced resulting in miserable working conditions. Men and women are being exploited for poverty wages, young children labor beside their parents, while sexual harassment, racial slurs and other abuses are common.

It was in response to these deteriorating conditions, along with the discovery that toxic pesticides sprayed on grapes threaten farm workers and their children, that in 1984, Cesar Chavez called on consumers to return to the boycott of all non-UFW California table grapes—including "organic" grapes.

Many of the most dangerous chemicals, that the UFW specifically targeted in our current grape boycott, that are used in agriculture have either been banned or are currently being phased out of use.

The farm workers' greatest power continues to lie in the hands of ordinary people, who choose to participate in this simple act of non-cooperation with injustice and indignity. Please continue with the struggle—

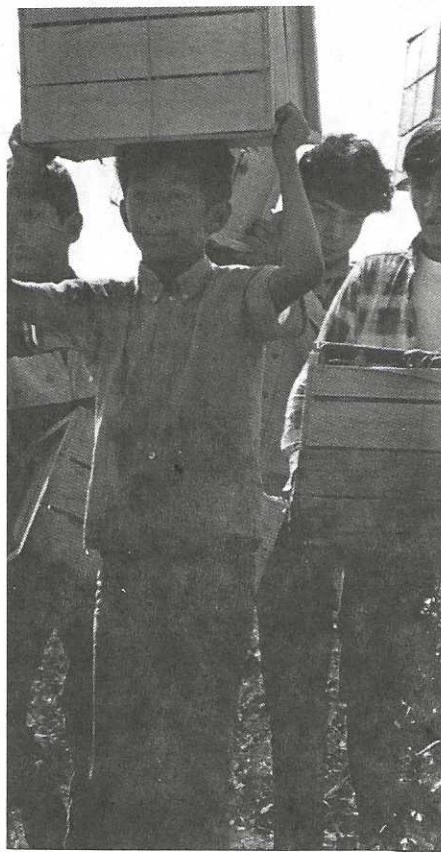
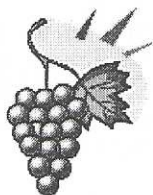
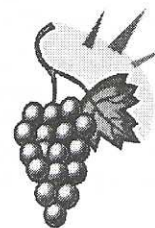


photo by George Ballis

Child laborers in the Valley vineyards.

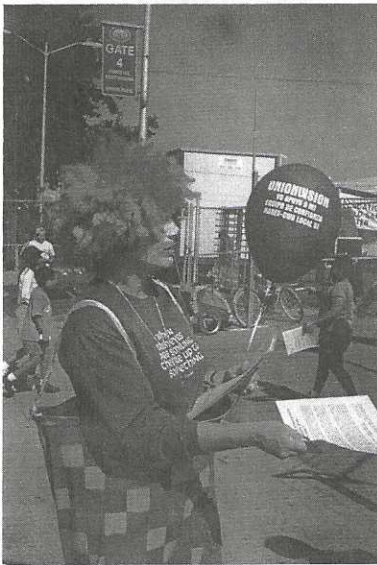


**BOYCOTT
NON-UFW
GRAPES!**



Valley Labor Chatter

IS CHANNEL 21 THE ONE?



Even the clowns support Channel 21 workers by passing out fliers at the Fresno Fair.

photo by Mike Rhodes

Cisneros - formerly the Mayor of San Antonio Texas and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development under President Clinton in the first term.

Fresno is the 14th largest television market in the United States and KFTV Channel 21 is the number one station in the market. Not the number one station among Spanish Speaking viewers - the number one station among all viewers of television in Fresno. KFTV is a profitable station, in fact small local advertisers are finding the rates going up as more national advertisers but time on KFTV Channel 21.

"With things going so well for the parent company and the ratings so high at the Fresno station, you might think that negotiating a contract would be easy. It isn't," said Reina Cardenas, Channel 21 news reporter.

Negotiations began in July. Instead of following the pattern of the contract they agreed to last year in San Francisco - Channel 21 keeps saying that Fresno workers don't deserve quite as good a contract as the workers in San Francisco.

"Fresno may not be San Francisco, but that doesn't mean that we deserve less rights under our contract. Channel 21 won't even agree to the same non-discrimination section as they already have in union contracts in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and other cities. They want us to give up the right to go to court over discrimination if we use our rights under our union contract. They say that Fresno is a small station and they can't afford to let us have our rights under the law!", said Martin Castellanos, Channel 21 news reporter.

Reina Cardenas and Martin Castellanos are on the Unions negotiating team. Bargaining sessions are scheduled in November and December. The Union is asking supporters to call the General Manager and tell her that you support a fair contract for the Channel 21 employees. Call Maria Gutierrez at (559) 222-2121.

On May 4, 1999 the 21 behind the scenes workers reporters and news anchors at KFTV Channel 21 voted for Union representation with NABET-CWA (National Association of Broadcast employees and Technicians—Communication Workers of America AFL-CIO). They are now seeking your help in getting a fair and just contract.

KFTV Channel 21 Fresno is owned by Univision - the number one Spanish language television network in the United States. Univision is a very successful company with big profits and growth nationwide. Univision is even listed on the New York Stock Exchange (symbol UVN). The President of Univision is Henry

NEW LABOR COALITION - CHURCHES, IMMIGRANTS AND GREENS

As the AFL-CIO held its national convention in Los Angeles in October, Union leaders were unveiling strategies for new coalitions for the labor movement. Initiatives are in the works to reach out to strategic new sectors.

LABOR IN THE PULPITS

At more than a dozen religious services, AFL-CIO Executive Council members and officers joined congregations and clergy in reaffirming the common bonds between people of faith and unions and the impact they have on the struggle for social and economic justice. "By working together and speaking out, we are a compelling chorus," AFL-CIO Executive Secretary Richard Trumka said at services at Temple Isaiah in West Los Angeles.

When religious groups and unions forge new partnerships, "it's a natural alliance growing out of the theological concept of the sacredness of work," Dr. Joseph Lowery, president emeritus of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said during a Sunday press conference unveiling "A New Plan for the Next Millennium," a blueprint for unions and faith groups to work from in the fight for economic and social justice.

Kim Bobo, executive director of the National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, outlined the plan's major components during the final day of Forging Partnerships: A National Religion-Labor Conference held prior to the AFL-CIO's Los Angeles convention. They include: Working together to build strong and stable communities with family-supporting jobs; expanding efforts to defend workers' freedom to improve their lives by forming a union; taking new stands for human rights, both at home and across the globe to end child labor and help lead the fight to end sweatshop labor; and promoting diversity and to support immigrant workers and help facilitate unions' efforts to diversify.

IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The AFL-CIO announced at an Oct. 9 convention press conference a new initiative to bring respect and dignity to immigrant workers. Starting next month, a series of four forums will take place in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and Atlanta, where immigrant workers will tell about the challenges and hurdles they face on the job and in the community. These workers "are often unaware of what their rights are and are easy targets for exploitation by employers willing to take advantage of them," said AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson.

"Immigrant workers are a significant and defining element in the labor movement in this country. Nearly every industrial union in the AFL-CIO can thank immigrants for helping form and shape their organizations," said Clayola Brown, UNITE vice president and chair of the AFL-CIO Executive Council Subcommittee on Immigration. She said the forums would lead to a white paper on the issues facing immigrant workers, "with facts, conclusions and recommendations presented to the full AFL-CIO Executive Council."

THE GREEN TEAM

Unions and environmental groups have joined forces to counter the corporate agenda and advance their mutual interests. Building on

(Continued on page 9)

(Valley Labor Chatter Continued from page 8)

its efforts to promote organizing and strengthen lobbying efforts, the Alliance for Sustainable Jobs and the Environment plans to bring thousands of demonstrators to Seattle next month to confront World Trade Organization officials meeting there. Steelworkers District 11 Director Dave Foster warned that the global body deprives elected officials of the right to protect the environment and worker safety. "We will make sure that basic American standards of fair trade, environmental protection and workers' rights" are addressed, he said.

UNION ACTIVISTS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS

November 6: Rally to support Cesar Chavez holiday in California. Join Dolores Huerta, Senator Richard Polanco, SEIU 1000, UFCW 770 and 10,000 petition signers in demanding recognition of Chavez' birthday, March 31, as an official state holiday. Noon, La Placita Olvera, Los Angeles. UFW Community Committee. (323) 221-9128. Email EvnAlarcon@aol.com.

November 19-21: California Labor Federation campaign school for political organizers. (916)444-3676.

November 30. March and Rally at the opening day of the World Trade Organization meeting, Seattle.

COMING IN JANUARY 2000

IMMIGRANT RIGHTS AND ORGANIZING CONFERENCE, SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 2000 IN FRESNO.

Community groups and Unions will meet to discuss how they can work together. Topics will include employer sanctions, INS raids, and organizing rights. Save this date!

Marc Lasher, D.O., MSW
Physician

Chanah Cossman, CNM, NP
Midwife and Nurse Practitioner

Chinatown
Family Medicine and Midwifery
Medical Office

Se Habla Español

829 F Street
Fresno, CA 93706

Phone: (559) 266-0444
Fax: (559) 266-7745

Hume Printing
Lithograph
SINCE 1911 INC.

A COMPLETE
OFFSET AND
LETTERPRESS
FACILITY

LOOK FOR THE UNION LABEL



2115 MONO • FRESNO, CA 93721
PH: 559-233-6174 • FAX: 559-233-6175
EMAIL: HUMEPNL@AOL.COM

LIVING WAGE CAMPAIGN: NOT YET READY FOR PRIME TIME

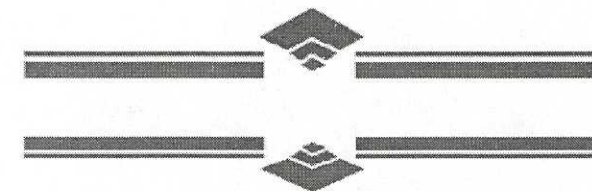
by Bob Baker

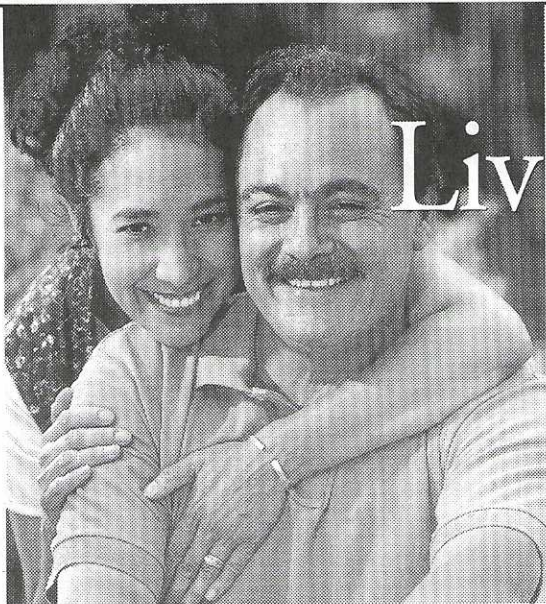
The planning group for the Living Wage Campaign has agreed to put the campaign on indefinite hold. While we will continue to educate about the importance of a living wage and about just exactly what a living wage means for a city, we will not attempt to get an ordinance presented in City Council at this time.

We believe that the time has come, with the approaching "end of welfare as we have known it," to guarantee a living wage for all who work. When we say that jobs do not pay a living wage, we mean that they do not pay the minimum income required to meet a family's basic needs. A living wage is the amount of income necessary to raise a family of four above the poverty line in the Fresno region. We believe working people have a right to a living wage.

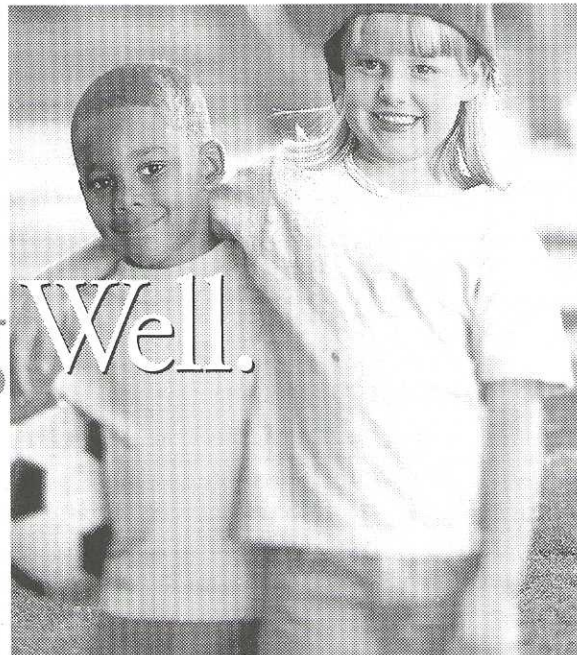
Eighty percent (80%) of new jobs in California pay less than a living wage.

Living Wage ordinances have been passed in 40 municipalities around the country and we hope to eventually have a broad enough base of organizational support to resume the campaign in Fresno.

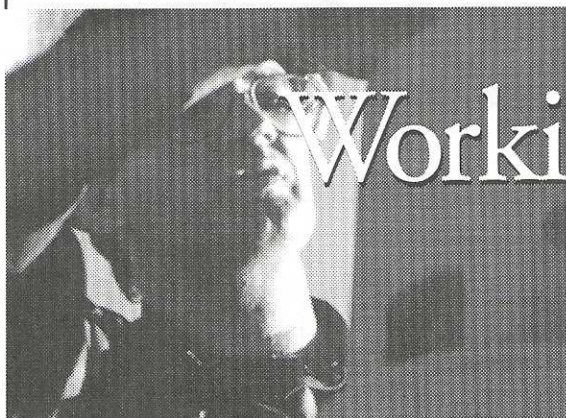




Living
Well.



Feeling Well.



Working
Well.

Well, Well, Well. Health Net offers a variety of programs and services to help keep you well. For starters, there's WellChoices. While it's not part of Health Net's benefits plans, WellChoices delivers savings on chiropractic, acupuncture and massage therapy. There's also Rapid Access,[®] a service that shows you how to get to a specialist fast. And Health Net's HealthLine, a 24-hour hot line that connects you to a registered nurse. Add to this our comprehensive preventive care services, and you can see why nearly 2.2 million Californians like you have chosen Health Net. To join them, just call **1-800-522-0088** (English) or **1-800-331-1777** (Spanish).

Because helping to keep you well is what we do well.



HEALTH NET[®]
California's Health Plan

www.healthnet.com

© 1999 Health Net

POLICE BRUTALITY—A SOUR TOPIC

by Matilda Rangel

Police brutality has been a major concern for me because it has touched me personally. I commend all the people who have stood by their principles and condemned such behavior without having, themselves, to be hit on the head with 33 pieces of lead.

Police brutality and abuse is both frightening and horrifying. Frightening because it is more common than we would like to believe and horrifying because one can't begin to imagine the scope of brutality of which some officers are capable. Because of my personal experience, I decided to gather information on police harassment and abuse. My sources of information mainly come from *The Bee* and TV, when sensational incidents are reported on, and also by direct report from people who seek help from human and civil rights groups I work with that address these issues.

Some years back, I sent for a copy of CBS News' 48 Hours video titled *Cops On Trial*. It had aired in January of 1992, approximately 9 months after the beating of Rodney King. Before that incident, many people were not convinced that some officers beat and kill people under cover of authority. The tape of the Rodney King beating makes obvious the fact that those officers didn't care that more than 20 citizens were watching. They didn't bother either to hide what they were doing or even make a pretense of checking on King's condition after they hog-tied and dragged him over the curb on his face.

The tape was living proof of police brutality at its worst, and finally brought public focus on the issue precipitating reports like the one from 48 Hours. I would like to point out that the victims in the video are African American or other non-white ethnicity. (I guess the film makers did not come to Fresno where Latinos are main police targets.) The video showed the difficult situations the police confront, and the ambiguity that often exists when police act violently. But there is no disputing the "king of the jungle" mindset that prevailed in every incident shown—police ready and willing to act with unfettered violence with little provocation.

In my research I have found stories of people locked up because of overzealous cops' fabrication of evidence. I have read about police endangering innocent citizens in their determination to apprehend suspects—one local case was the killing of an 8-year old boy when an officer shot into an apartment (March, 1994); another was the Rapozzo/Hernandez case, (January, 1999) where an innocent bystander was wounded and small children put at risk; another, the Gallardo case, (July 11, 1997) where the police pulled uninvolved people out of their home in their nightclothes and detained them after killing the father who had never been in trouble with the law.

What causes such behavior? One psychologist advised that officers need more training and counseling to help battle anger and stress on the job. Without training to handle battle anger and fear-induced adrenalin, they over-react. A Fresno psychologist concurred, stating that "to say we have a major brutality problem in Fresno is oversteating the situation, but to say we have 'No' problem is naive."

In 1985, the state attorney general held forums to hear people's complaints about police brutality. The Chicano Civil Rights Network, along with other organizations, compiled a report that was given to the Police Chief and the City Council. It listed goals and objectives to end Fresno police brutality and included a section analyzing reported incidents. It stated that a higher percentage of people of color met death at the hands of police, and assessed that there was more harassment in communities of color than in other areas of the city. Community organizations (largely from southeast Fresno) joined with churches and other groups, such as Metro Ministry, to set up a Human Relations Commission and establish an Ombudsman to handle complaints of police misconduct. So now an official mechanism for citizen review is in place. But there is a problem. The entities established have power to investigate but not to act.

As a result of this impotence—and even though law enforcement agencies are good at deflecting charges of wrongdoing—lawsuits are filed with increasing frequency. The citizens and taxpayers wind up paying for their "servants" unacceptable behavior. In 1990 (the last year for which I have statistics) there were 36 cases filed in Fresno city and county, with claims of about \$41 million in damages. And in Los Angeles, the police department has cost the city about \$109 million since fiscal year '93—about one third of the city's payout for litigation. Amnesty International will, in its next report, for the first time, name the United States as a violator of human rights. The report concludes by saying that our people are subjected to sustained and deliberate brutality at the hands of some police officers. The report also condemns what it sees as a general failure to punish offending officers. Case after case indicates that police too often respond to violence with more, and more authoritative, violence. But my profound belief is that the way to peace and understanding is through nonviolence. To achieve this goal, officers, as well as everyone else, need to realize that brutalizing people will not bring about the respect that they seek. We need to remember that only respect breeds respect.



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.



HEALTH CARE ON FRONT BURNER

by Ray Ensher

Another 1 million Americans joined the uninsured during 1998, deepening the challenge of providing affordable health care for a nation that increasingly lacks basic coverage. California alone accounted for about 1/3 of that increase. California may be the leader in a universal health plan with the signing of SB480. If this plan is implemented in California it could be the impetus for other states to follow. SB480 provides for a study and report in the year 2002.

Ray Ensher works with Health Care for All, Central Valley Chapter. For more information contact him at (559) 439-8140.



LONNEY D. EDWARDS, D.C.

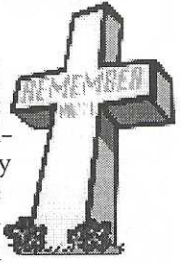
1570 NORTH WISHON • FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93728
(209) 266-7356 • (209) 264-4454



RELIGIOUS ACTION FOR DISARMAMENT

Dec. 29, 1999 - Jan. 2, 2000
Las Vegas, NV & the Nevada Test Site
Join 1,000 people in a candlelit procession onto
the Nevada Test Site at midnight, Dec. 31
Nevada Desert Experience (702) 646-4814
P. O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127
e-mail: nde@igc.apr.org.

LAS CRUCES: A CALL TO ACTION



You are invited to join in a project that will create an exhibition of 300 white crosses at Centro Bellas Artes on November 2, 1999, celebrated as "Día de los Muertos". Community immigrant rights activists are asking you to place the names of loved ones who have died in migration, or have been victims of violence, on the crosses which will be provided. At least one cross will be dedicated to women who have been assaulted or killed in the process of migration.

The intensified policing of the U.S. - Mexico border has driven flows of undocumented migrants to more remote and dangerous routes resulting in the estimated deaths of over 300 persons per year due to drowning, dehydration, and assault.

HOW MANY MORE HAVE TO DIE?

At the border, and in other parts in the United States, immigrants have been subjected to violence by law enforcement agents, white supremacists, and others. As the INS and police expand their efforts in the interior of the United States, raids, high-speed chases, and assaults against immigrants have increased. U.S. immigration policies and an anti-immigrant climate reinforce one another to foster conditions which lead to the loss of human life.

Help convey the message about the personal and national tragedy on our southern border and in all of our communities: No more deaths at the border! No more violence towards immigrants!

HOW MANY MORE DEATHS ARE ACCEPTABLE TO THE U.S. IN ITS QUEST TO "CONTROL ITS BORDER?"

This event is sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Mexico-U.S. Advocates Network, Comité ¡NO NOS VAMOS!, Carpenters Local Union 701, Centro Bellas Artes, Fresno Immigration Roundtable, El Concilio Immigration Project, The Labor/Community Alliance and many others. For more information call: M. Gloria Hernández at (559) 497-0833

Chris Petersen's

Big Wheel

Specializing in Touring & Commuting

Expert Repair (559) **222-4823**

call for seasonal hours

4676 N Blackstone at Gettysburg
Fresno, CA 93726 Great Family Fun!

Bicycles

Four Reviews of *Dream What We Can Become and Rejoice*

A new book by George Elfie Ballis

The photographs in *Dream What We Can Become and Rejoice* bring you the reality of farm workers lives in the Central Valley of California. This book is about the people who organized the United Farm Workers Union, their lives working in the fields, and how they enjoy themselves after work. A person has to have passion to take pictures like these! I think George Elfie Ballis has done a wonderful job with this project because he cares about the people he is working with. The pictures show the dignity of the hard working people in the Central Valley. The sign on the back of the book says "DON'T MOURN - ORGANIZE". That's exactly what this book inspires you to do.

-Mike Rhodes

Moving and passionate presentation. The pictures in this book capture the pain and the joy of the efforts behind the UFW. And what's more, it captures a piece of history that many would rather ignore. You deserve to know the truth. Many of your neighbors probably care more about the people who empty their trash! What do you know about the people who pick the food you eat?

-Anonymous from Auberry

With remarkable simplicity, George Ballis' *Dream What We Can Become and Rejoice* captures the life struggle of the people who work the soil of the great San Joaquin Valley. In 106 photos with captions blasting open the mind, we see and feel the full range of anguish, oppression, poverty, hope, and joy of women, men and children in their unending struggle just to get by and to timelessly organize to make change.

-Fred Hirsch

It records the story of the soil yielding fruit to labor. The images of *Dream What We Can Become and Rejoice* could only have been registered by someone intimately acquainted with the labor of incarnation—the process by which matter and spirit combine and give birth to life. *Dream What We Can Become and Rejoice* captures the historic moment when the United Farm Worker movement brought youth, energy, hope and self-belief to the resigned dignity and endurance of an oppressed people; but it also records the timeless story of the soil yielding fruit to labor, of community being "worked" to produce justice.

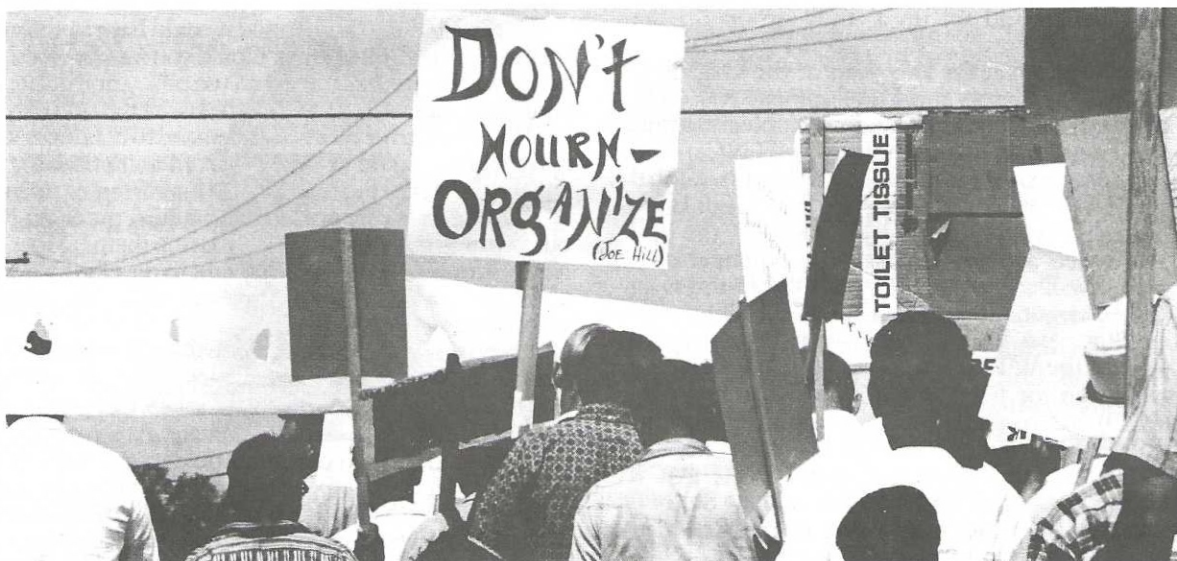
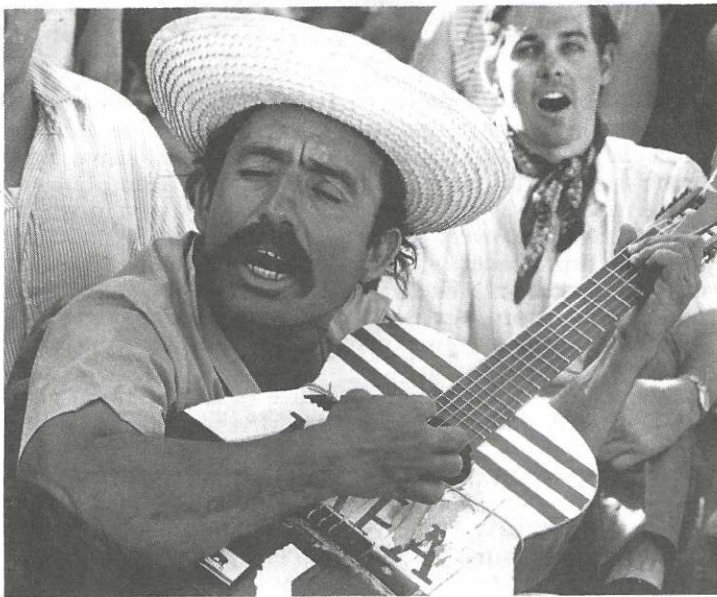
- Richard Stone

Dream What We Can Become and Rejoice

By: George Elfie Ballis

Spiral-bound - 18 pages (February 1, 1995)

SunMt; ISBN: 0938911139 \$15.00



MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

by Bob Baker

This summer, the United Nations Development Program issued its annual Human Development Report. The document is a stinging indictment of globalization and its destructive impact on the well-being of so many of the world's people.

According to the Report, in developing countries nearly 1.3 billion people do not have access to clean water, one in seven children of primary school age is out of school, 840 million people are malnourished, and an estimated 1.3 billion people live on incomes of less than \$1 a day. Even in the industrial countries, globalization has taken a grim toll. One person in eight suffers from either long-term unemployment, illiteracy, a life-expectancy of less than 60 years, or an income below the national poverty line. This human misery is not a consequence of globalization's incomplete advance. It is instead a direct by-product of the unjust distribution of wealth generated by the uncontrolled market system globalized.

The Multilateral Agreement on Investment would speed up this whole process as Transnational Corporations (TNCs) become more and more powerful, even more powerful than the International Monetary Fund (IMF). **"We are writing the constitution of a single global economy."** -Renato Ruggerio, World Trade Organization Director General (Singapore, December 1996)

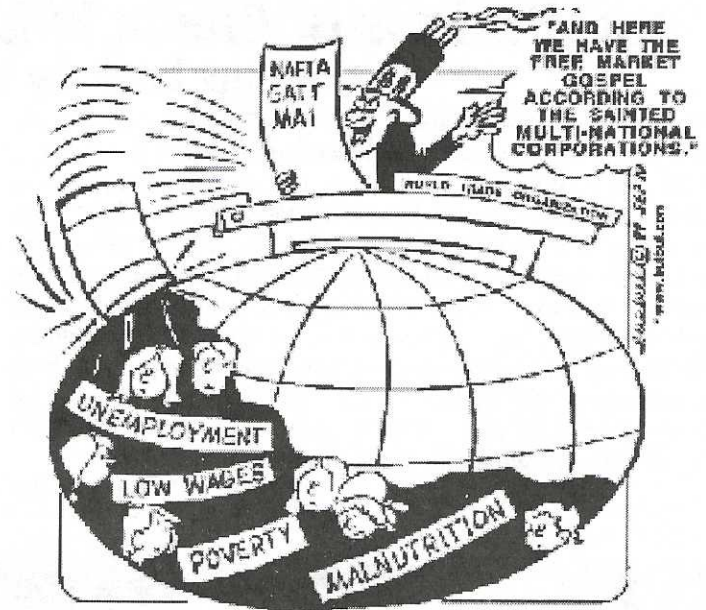
While most of us do not feel equipped to analyze major international agreements or processes, we do recognize the affects of NAFTA as jobs are sucked to Free Enterprise Zones and Maquiladors and globalization becomes the ever present rationale for lower pay and layoffs. NAFTA is the model for MAI but MAI is intended to extend the power of transnational corporations to limit the power of nations and especially government at any level below federal government. If adopted, this agreement would dramatically undermine the ability of federal, state and local governments to shape economic and social policies that foster safe, healthy and equitable communities.

The Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) aimed to set strict global rules limiting governments' right and ability to regulate currency speculation, investment in land, factories, services, stocks, and more.

The MAI even included provisions empowering foreign corporations to sue national governments in MAI tribunals for monetary compensation if they believed government policies undercut their future profits. The Western Governors Conference was alarmed and set up a study group on the MAI.

It was negotiated in secret for two years at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a club of 29 of the world's richest countries. Negotiations were pushed by Transnational Corporations (TNCs) and major business lobbies worldwide. Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch calls MAI a "stealth investment pact." Until January 1997, the MAI text was entirely secret. In 1997, the deal started to unravel when activists exposed the potential corporate power grab. By December 1998, the OECD threw in the towel and ceased negotiations. Now many OECD countries, led by the European Union (EU), want to revive the MAI by putting it in the WTO.

"The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has recently launched a public relations campaign which we have dubbed the 'charm offensive,' to convince the public that the nearly completed MAI text is harmless, if not beneficial." (Lori Wallach, Harvard Law School) This effort to obscure the issues is reflected in the *Report by the Chairman of the Negotiating Group* 28 April 1998, "The MAI is now the centre of heightened public scrutiny as part of a broader debate about the implications of globalization.



Consultations with non-governmental groups as well as with business and labour representatives need to continue. A key objective of the MAI is to provide a comprehensive legal framework for the treatment of foreign investment. Subject to international law and to international agreements to which it has subscribed, every state reserves the right to prescribe the conditions under which all investors operate within its national jurisdiction. The MAI would not inhibit the normal non-discriminatory exercise of regulatory powers by governments and such exercise of regulatory powers would not amount to expropriation."

It will take the continued alliance of activists, local governments and unions to prevent the MAI from being reborn at the WTO.

Local officials realized how the MAI would jeopardize their ability to serve their communities. Many city councils, such as San Francisco, Seattle, Geneva and others rallied against the MAI by passing local resolutions declaring their communities "MAI Free Zones."

If the MAI is implemented it could have a profound effect on Fresno and the Central Valley. Could you imagine local government not being able to determine land use policy or regulate air pollution control standards? If the MAI is the law of the land corporations can challenge local government and demand to develop housing projects in agricultural areas. If local government entities try to challenge these corporations they can be sued for infringing on investor rights.

Do we want corporations clear cutting the Sierra Nevada without anything government can do to stop them? How about giving multinational corporations the right to develop a new community with over 60,000 people on the banks of the San Joaquin river that would destroy the parkway?

Even as I write, the Africa Growth & Opportunity Act (AGOA), perhaps the most outrageous and most obviously colonialist trade bill ever to make its way to the halls of the U.S. Congress, has been passed by the house and is before the Senate. As a condition for trading with the U.S., African countries would have to undergo the kinds of structural adjustment programs mandated by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. This bill conditions trade with the U.S. on African countries' willingness to reallocate government resources away from basic human services such as health and education and to write off taxes for foreign corporations. This is U.S. enforced MAI!

SEASON OF CONSCIENCE A TIME FOR ACTION

by Phyllis Fess Baker

It's becoming a Fresno tradition for people opposing sweatshop labor to visit Wal-Mart on the second Saturday of December from noon to 1:00 p.m. The urgent need for the informational rally has not changed. Wal-Mart is still the world's largest retailer, abusing the largest number of women and child workers around the world. Wal-Mart still refuses to disclose its production sites to human rights groups wishing to monitor working conditions for those who make clothing and toys for Wal-Mart.

Since last December, progress has been made with some offending corporations. Perhaps gaining the biggest victory were students from over a dozen major universities who rallied against sweatshop conditions for those producing university "logo" clothing and collection items. Their universities' purchasing is now restricted to corporations who have made full public disclosure of their manufacturing plants and have allowed neutral monitoring of working conditions therein.

Join us for the kick off of the Third Annual Holiday Season of Conscience/People's Right to Know Campaign, nationally sponsored by People of Faith Network and the National Labor Committee.

Raising awareness and raising Cain seems to be a successful strategy. If you favor jobs with dignity, justice, and respect for human and worker rights bring your sign to Wal-Mart at Shaw and Brawley, on December 9th (Human Rights Day).

The December issue of the Labor/Community Alliance newsletter will focus on informed consumerism, exploring topics such as war toys, games of violence, environmentally friendly spending and, of course, sweatshops and child labor.

GOVERNOR SIGNS NEW DEATH WARRANT FOR MUMIA

The Governor of Pennsylvania, Thomas Ridge, has signed a new warrant for the execution by lethal injection of Mumia Abu-Jamal of Philadelphia. The execution date is set for December 2, but a federal judge is expected to stay this order within a few days. Mumia's immediate response was:

"This is just the next stage of the fight. We will continue to fight. We will win!"

The governor signed the warrant, knowing full well that Mumia would be filing within a matter of days for a writ of habeas corpus with the federal district court in Philadelphia. Under the 1996 Effective Death Penalty Act, Mumia had to file before the end of October.

This is the same stunt that Ridge pulled in 1995 when Mumia was scheduled to file a petition for a new trial in the state court on a Monday morning. Ridge rushed to sign a death warrant late on the Friday afternoon before the filing. The pending warrant was then used by Judge Sabo as an excuse to rush the proceedings. People should be righteously angry at Ridge and should expose him everywhere for pulling this same stunt again. For more information see www.mumia.org.

CENSUS 2000

"How America Knows What America Needs" is a slogan of the Year 2000 Census. For those of us who believe that "What America Needs" is to address the widening gap between the rich and poor it is vital to know their numbers. The census will count the rich, but many of the poor will be missed. Our local labor unions and community based organizations can help minimize the undercount of the many poor people who live in the San Joaquin Valley.

Some groups have already been meeting to develop a united strategy to reach those who have been overlooked in past censuses. The groups include Catholic Charities, Proteus, CRLA, the Frente Indigena, and Tulare County Civic Action; for information on how you can become involved call Jeff Ponting at CRLA at 441-8721. In addition, organizations can become Questionnaire Assistance Centers where individuals will be helped to fill out census forms. For details call Diane Berry at the Fresno Census office, 487-5343.

Sari H. Dworkin Ph. D

Psychologist

Marriage and Family Therapist

Lic. #13852

Lic. #23370

Feminist Therapy

Sexual Orientation Issues

1642 E. Herndon, Suite 106 - Fresno, CA 93720 (559) 447-1400

Copies of the Labor/Community Alliance Newsletter are available at the following locations:

African-American Museum
Arte Americas
Borders Books
Colegio Popular, St. John's Cathedral
College Community Congregational Church, UCC
Fresno County EOC
Fresno County Library
Fresno Metro Ministry
Fresno Teachers Association
Hart's Haven
Java Café
Luis Melendez Boots
Northern California Coalition for Immigrant Rights
PanValley Institute
Patience Milrod's Law Office
Planned Parenthood
Starbuck's (Herndon and Marks)
Uncle Harry's (First and Herndon)
Summers Schwinn Bicycle Shop
The Movies
Unitarian Church

The Labor/Community Alliance Newsletter is also distributed through the offices of many Union Locals. To receive your L/CA at home, see the subscription box on page two.

Labor/Community Alliance

P.O. Box 5077

Fresno, CA 93755

• **Change Service Requested** •

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage

PAID

Fresno, CA
Permit No. 02103

AUYDANOS EN ESPAÑOL

The Labor/Community Alliance will publish a Spanish Language edition in January. We are actively soliciting articles. If you have an idea for an article call Mike Rhodes at (559) 226-0477. Completed articles are due by December 10.

Let's Get Organized

Are you tired of:

- X lousy wages;**
- X no benefits;**
- X no respect on the job?**

Call one of the following local union organizers to help you make the world a better place to work!

Pam Whalen, Gene Garcia,
Yolanda Guerra
SEIU Local 535
Public Employees, Health Care, Social
Services
(559) 275-1404

David Yancy
Plumbers Local 246
Plumbers
(559) 252-5367

Glen Westersund
Engineers & Scientists of CA Local 20
Technical & Professional Workers
(559) 263-7481

Kenneth McCormack
International Brotherhood of
Electrical Workers Local 100
Electricians
(559) 251-8241

Marc Scalzo
International Association of
Machinists & Aerospace Workers
Local 653
Auto Repair, Industrial, Retail
Consumer, Electronics
(559) 264-2817
www.scalsoatalk.com

Doug Whipple
Local 701
Carpenters
(559) 268-3895

Jimmy Hammack
Teamster Local 431
(559) 486-5410

Tony Prendez
United Steel Workers of America
Manufacturing
(559) 264-5342

Frank Flores
Sheet Metal Workers Local 162
Sheet Metal Manufacturing
(559) 255-0454

Hotel Employees
Restaurant Employees Union
Local 19
Restaurant Workers
(559) 485-0601

James Todd
Rachel Rodriguez
Ninfa Franco
SEIU Local 250
Health Care Union
Representing 47,000 Health Care
Workers in No. California
(559) 271-7005