

Labor/Community ALLIANCE

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FRESNO CELEBRATES THE LIFE OF CESAR CHAVEZ

By Mike Rhodes

Events celebrating the life of labor leader Cesar Chavez will be held in Fresno on April 9 & 10. The annual march in downtown Fresno will start at the Fresno Convention Center Exhibit Hall at 12 Noon on Saturday. The march will go from the Exhibit Hall, down Tulare to 6th, down "Chavez Blvd" (AKA: Kings Canyon), and back to the Exhibit Hall. For full details about events happening in Fresno see the calendar on page 5.

Cesar Chavez is a working class hero! He dedicated his life to improving the working conditions of farm laborers in the San Joaquin Valley and throughout California. Many UFW events happened right here in Fresno! Remember the march from Delano to Sacramento? The grape & lettuce boycotts? The fasting for justice? Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers Union (UFW) had a huge impact in this community. Let's make this year's celebration the biggest ever.

The Labor/Community Alliance encourages all Union Locals to come to the march with a delegation of workers and a banner identifying your Union. Chicanos, Community groups, Labor Unions - we all need to march side by side this April 10 to show respect and celebrate the life of Cesar Chavez.

Let us show this community that we are united and working class solidarity is stronger than ever. Si Se Puede!

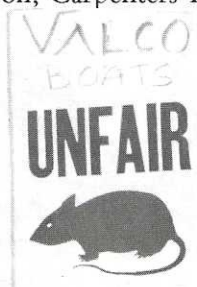


VALCO WORKERS ON STRIKE! SOLIDARITY NEEDED

Sheet Metal Workers Local 371 unanimously voted to go out on strike at Valco Boats in mid-March. The employer is demanding take aways in health and other benefits and offering only a 20 cent an hour increase. This would, in effect, reduce employees' real wages by 20-30% by forcing them to pay for their own health care.

A support rally for the workers was held on March 19 to demand that the employer return to the bargaining table. It was a strong showing of Labor and Community solidarity. Representatives from United Food & Commercial Workers Local 1288, Sheet Metal Workers Local 162, Bakers Union Local 85, California Faculty Association, California School Employees Association, Carpenters Local 701, The Green Party, Ironworkers Teamsters, Service tional Union, and nity Alliance at-

The Labor/ urges you to call 9551 and demand good faith with Local 371, and, lucky to have a boat order



Local Union 155, The Employees Interna- the Labor/Comm- tended the rally.

Community Alliance Valco Boats at 299- that they bargain in Sheet Metal Workers ,should you be so



photo: Mike Rhodes

THE PURPOSE

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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EDITORIAL

The Labor/Community Alliance welcomes the Fresno Center for Non-violence to the pages of this newsletter. The Center for Nonviolence is sponsoring one full page in this month's newsletter. This is being done on a trial basis to see how it works. We think that it is a very good fit for us to include the activities and events of such a wonderful organization dedicated to the struggle for peace and social justice. The Center has, for some time now, been mailing the LC/A newsletter to all their members. Their news and information was wrapped around the outside. We think there are significant advantages to including their information on the inside pages. For one thing, they are now able to reach about 2,500 more readers.

We have always included the activities of the Center in our pages but now they have a whole page to say whatever they want. Imagine 'The Fresno Bee', or one of the television stations, giving the progressive community such open access! (In your dreams...).

The reality however, is that all this costs *money*. If you support the good work of the Center and would like to see them continue to appear in these pages, we encourage you to support them by sending a contribution to: The Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness, Fresno CA 93728, marked "for the newsletter." While you have your checkbook out, why not send The Labor/Community Alliance a contribution too! Our address is P.O. Box 5077, Fresno CA 93755.

It is our hope that this newsletter will continue to grow. Linking organized labor & community activists helps build a stronger progressive Fresno. We think that the inclusion of the Fresno Center For Nonviolence in these pages is a big step in the right direction.



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1,000 TEACHERS RALLY AT BOARD MEETING

STRONG COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR FAIR SALARIES

By Jim Scholtz

Demonstrating support for putting teachers at the head of the class, over 1,000 teachers joined together on February 25 at the Fresno Unified School District Education Center for marching, songs, speeches, and a really good time. Passing motorists and fire trucks sounded their horns in support while teachers cheered.

Shortly before the board meeting, the huge crowd gathered near the doors to the FUSD board room to listen to speakers including Garry Bredefeld, husband of Powers-Ginsburg teacher Susan (in his spare time he's a Fresno City Councilman), Wayne Johnson, Vice-President of California Faculty Association CTA, and Fresno Teachers Association President Larry Moore.

Councilman Bredefeld and Vice-President Johnson urged the crowd to stay strong and united. President Moore went through the litany of wrong statements and budget miscalculations that have been consistently coming from the administration for the last two years. "The School Board should LISTEN TO TEACHERS," he said. "The administration gives the community and the school board incomplete or wrong information and that's what leads to conflict in negotiations."

POLICE REFUSE ENTRY

But after hearing the speakers, the crowd got a rude surprise: the administration locked the crowd out! Two uniformed police officers physically blocked the door and would not admit more than a small portion of the general crowd. And the officers had a written list of Superintendent Garcia's "Chosen" who were allowed to pass.

Many teachers, who were not among "The Chosen," and who had wanted to express their opinion about negotiations and the administration's policies, were denied the opportunity. In addition to the bargaining support rally, FTA has been sponsoring commercials on radio and TV to build public support for fair teacher salaries. Teachers, volunteering their time, have been canvassing neighborhoods and distributing door hangers to generate support, too. Fresno teachers encourage all community members to call the School Board at 457-3727. Tell them you support fair salaries for teachers, and to advance teachers to the head of the class!



photo: Howard Watkins



The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom sponsored this "Celebration of Labor Women" luncheon on March 13, International Women's Day. Pictured are Elizabeth Anderson, organizer in the transportation department of the Fresno Bee; Shirley Kirsten, organizer of the new substitute teacher's union (FASTA); Mary Ellen Clay (WILPF); Susan Arpad with the California Faculty Association (CFA) and Laura Fultz (WILPF).

A WOMAN' PLACE IS IN HER UNION!

THE EDISON PROJECT IS ALIVE AND WELL

By Mike Rhodes

The Edison Project, an attempt to privatize public education, is back! We reported in last month's newsletter that the Edison Project had attempted to gain inroads into the Fresno market but was rebuffed by teachers and parents. Well, their back---and working harder than ever to put "profit" before the needs of quality education. It would be a shame to hand over public education to a soulless corporation whose primary mission is to make money.

If the Edison Project is allowed to take over Fresno schools we expect teachers hourly wages to decrease, "trouble students" to be transferred to non Edison Project schools, and an education 'for profit' mentality to be established.

An interesting side to all this is that one of the Edison Project prime backers is none other than Donald Fisher, Chairman of The Gap. You might remember Mr. Fisher as one of the big supporters of Proposition 226 that, if passed, would have virtually eliminated organized labor's participation in the political process. The Gap also manufactures its clothing in sweatshops around the world and is in the process of opening a major distribution center in Fresno. Small world, isn't it?

For more information about the Edison Project contact the Labor/Community Alliance at 226-0477.



Digital Photo, Courtesy FTA

TEACHERS RALLY AT BOARD MEETING

FRESNO CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE

Center Report: April 1999

By Richard Stone

The Welch Report

By Jack H. Welch, M.D.

For One Night Only! The Center proudly announces the Fresno premiere of *"The Church of 80% Sincerity"*, a one-man show written and performed by David Roche. The date is Sunday, April 26; the time is 7:00 p.m.; the place is the Unitarian Universalist Church at 4144 N. Millbrook Ave.

David is an amazing person. Born with severe facial disfigurement, he has learned to live successfully---and humorously---with his lot. He has taken his autobiographical play to campuses and performance venues across the country, where he has been received with acclaim. As one reviewer put it, "Roche cuts through the inevitable feelings of pity and tension with a keen sense of humor. Roche miraculously turns his painful subject matter...into a mesmerizing comedy performance."

David comes to us specially through a long friendship with a Center member. Join us for this remarkable evening of theater while supporting the Center. (Tickets \$10 at the door).

Phones 'N' Us: Contrary to last month's Report, our phone system is unchanged. What we wanted is more complicated (and costly) than expected. So for now, what is will have to be good enough.

Mumia: To be apprised of planning meetings, local events and ride-sharing/bus possibilities related to the huge Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, culminating in a rally in San Francisco on April 24th, call the Center calendar line at 237-3223. One analyst calls this "the biggest grassroots coalition since Viet Nam." Thinking to join in? JUST DO IT!

Wanted: For the Center---a TV and VCR to replace the ones belonging to The Living Room (which has moved to a new location and is missed). For the Center's secretary---a decent single bed to replace the futon that's giving her back fits. (A trade is doable.)

Video of the Month: *'Genocide by Sanction'*, a powerful indictment of the U.S. embargo of Iraq, resulting in vast misery for the people (and especially the children) of Iraq, who have little influence on their government's actions. Available to subscribers of the Center's Video Club (one year membership for \$5).E

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• The Board thanks the following individuals whose contributions have made possible the inclusion of our reports within the pages of the L/CA: Matilda Rangel, Angela Price, Valta Pointer, Barbara Nelson, Margaret Hudson, and Ray Ensher. Donations are needed to keep this experiment going. Checks can be sent to the Center, 985 N. Van Ness, Fresno 93728, specify: 'for the newsletter'.

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This report is based upon mail received at the Center for Nonviolence, which comes from other Peace Centers in California and various national peace and justice organizations. The purpose of the Report is both to inform and to suggest legislative action, especially through input to our legislators and to the president in Washington D.C.

A recent gathering at the White House and Capitol Hill protested the U.S. refusal to sign the 133 nation accord banning the use of land mines. "The U.S. fails in moral leadership," said Senator Patrick Leahy, D-Vermont. The administration has agreed to stop using land mines everywhere by 2003, except in S. Korea where, the Pentagon says, they are needed to protect U.S. troops stationed there. The U.N. estimates that there are 110,000,000 landmines planted around the world; 26,000 people die from, or are maimed by, anti-personnel land mines each year.

California Peace Action, Feb. 4, 1999, includes a statement from the Union of Concerned Scientists, Washington, D.C.: 'In January the Clinton administration announced plans to prepare for deployment of a nation wide missile defense system (Star Wars) by 2005, which would require negotiation with Russia on the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) treaty. The near certain result of such deployment in the U.S. will be to freeze nuclear arsenals at their present or higher levels. This would postpone deep cuts in nuclear weapons and block serious discussion of their elimination'.

Main arguments against missile defense are: 'it is an expensive waste, and the equipment thus far has failed its testing'; 'the danger of rogue missile attack is greatly exaggerated'; and 'the U.S. is, itself, increasingly dependent upon its own missiles (especially cruise)'.

The administration should now be pressed to move toward a world wide regime restricting production, possession and deployment of long range ballistic missiles for military purposes.

Howard Zinn, author of *The People's History of the U.S.*, writes in March 1999 *Chico Peaceful Action*, "Many people seem obsessed with the fear that Clinton's ordeal will loose a wave of sexual McCarthyism on the U.S....One might think that the sight of corpses of Iraqi civilians killed in recent American bombings, and calls for increased budgets for the Pentagon, would restore a sense of proportion to those who think the most important issue today is the attack on Clinton...The public's refusal to repudiate Clinton likely is about the right to privacy, which all Americans want" (and the economy is good!)

Clinton and the Republicans have joined to act against the poor, to make the corporate rich richer, to build more prisons, and to maintain embargoes on the Iraqi and Cuban peoples. "Many people on the American Left", writes Zinn, "have hoodwinked themselves into surrendering their historic mission as critics of the bi-partisan Establishment. They are diverting their energy and talents at a time when the voices for economic justice at home and human rights abroad need to be louder than ever".

Calendar of Events APRIL 1999

Wednesday, March 31 Noon

The 5th annual Cesar E. Chavez celebration starts off with the garlanding ceremony on Chavez's birthday, at the Chavez statue in the Peace Garden at CSUF.

Wednesday, March 31 Noon to 7:00 PM

Arte Americas is open free of charge to the public - CUMPLEANOS DE CESAR CHAVEZ. The center remembers Chavez in videos and prints. Come by to contribute a story, photo or anecdote to the oral history project. 1630 Van Ness Ave.

Saturday, April 3 9:00 AM

The Kennedy Club of the San Joaquin will hold its monthly breakfast meeting at Carrow's restaurant (Country Room) at Ashlan and Blackstone avenues. "A Time to Remember: JFK in Sound and Video" and political discussion on the current state will be the theme for this meeting. Call 447-1670.

Wednesday, April 7 11:00 AM

Madera County California Retired Teachers Association meeting with guest speaker David duBois, Madera County Office of Education, Avenue 14 and Road 28 in Madera. Call 439-8140.

Wednesday, April 7 7:00 PM

Planned Parenthood lecture with Elizabeth Cavendish, Legal Director and General Counsel of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League. RSVP please: e-mail <VinT.Ngo.vinh_ngo@ppmarmonte.org> or call 488-4913.

Friday, April 9 5:30 PM

Service Employees International Union & the Western Conference African-American Caucus dinner at Pardini's Banquet and Meeting Room at 2257 West Shaw Avenue. Bring labor and friends of labor together to build a permanent infrastructure to protect the rights of working people. Call 448-3902 for details.

Friday, April 9 6:00 PM

Candlelight vigil honoring the life of Cesar Chavez at the Peace Garden at CSUF.

Friday, April 9 7:30 PM

KFCF and the Fresno Free College Foundation are featuring speaker John Ross at the Bonner Auditorium of the Fresno Art Museum at 2233 N First Street at Clinton. Cost is \$5 at the door. Check out Page 10 for details of this fascinating man and his history.

Saturday, April 10 9:30 AM

The Fresno Center for Nonviolence monthly board meeting at 985 N Van Ness Ave. All are welcome. Call 237-3223.

Tuesday, April 13 6:30 PM

Second Tuesday at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence. This month will feature a discussion about the Mumia Abu-Jamal case and Millions for Mumia march on April 24. Call 237-3223..

Saturday, April 10 10:00 AM

Mass for Chavez at Fresno Convention Center Exhibit Hall. At Noon there will be a march from the Exhibit Hall, down Tulare to 6th down Chavez Blvd. (Kings Canyon) back to the exhibit hall. There will be food at the Exhibit Hall and entertainment from 2-4 PM. Call 490-2961 for more information.

Thursday, April 15

Tax Day

Leafleting during the day at the Tower District Post Office sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. In the evening leafleting will be at the Main Post Office on "E" Street. The leaflets will remind taxpayers of the enormous amount of money being used by the military and how those tax dollars could be shifted to meet human needs. Call 229-9807 for more information.

Thursday, April 15

Deadline for submissions for the May issue of the Labor/Community Alliance Newsletter. Call 226-0477.

Thursday, April 15 7:30 PM

Death Penalty Focus meeting at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Call 323-4871.

Thursday, April 17

Earth Day

Tuesday, April 20

Teach-in at Fresno City College about Mumia Abu-Jamal case.

Thursday, April 20 7:15 PM

Health Care for All meeting at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Call 855-2438.

Thursday, April 22

Fresno County Green Party formation meeting at the Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness. County Council candidates will be nominated and elected. Snacks and drinks provided. Call 497-1724.

Friday, April 23 5:00 PM

Street Heat on KFCF 88.1. Featuring labor community activists.

Saturday, April 24

Millions for Mumia demonstration in San Francisco. For more information call 439-8141 or (415)821-0459.

Sunday, April 24 7:00 PM

The Fresno Center for Nonviolence is sponsoring a performance by David Roche, "**The Church of 80% Sincerity**", based on his experience living with a severe facial disfigurement. Roche "miraculously turns his painful subject matter into mesmerizing comedy performance". Tickets are \$10. The event will be held at the Unitarian Church, 4144 N. Millbrook. Call 266-2559.

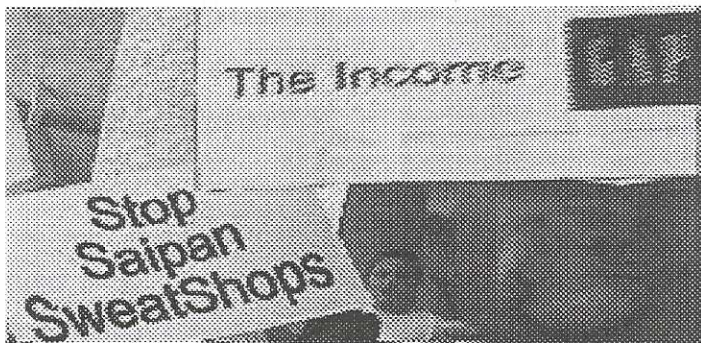
Wednesday, April 28

MOBILIZE FOR SAFE JOBS - This day will mark the 11th observance of Workers Memorial Day, when unionists across the nation will remember workers killed and injured on the job and renew the fight for safe workplaces. "Mourn for the Dead. Fight for the Living. Organize and Mobilize for Safe Jobs" is this year's theme. Posters, fliers, petitions, stickers and other WMD materials are available through the AFL-CIO's Safety and Health Department. Call (202)637-5367 or visit the AFL-CIO website at www.aflcio.org.safety.

In Fresno there will be a fundraiser for the **Workers Disaster Relief Fund**. The Central Labor Council plans to hold a tri-tip BBQ downtown. Call 275-1151 for details.

Sunday, April 25 2:00 - 4:00 PM

Annual meeting of The Valley Memorial Society (VMS) at the Retired Teachers Memorial Building at 3933 E. Saginaw Way in Fresno. Speaker will be Ruth Ratzloff, a Fresno attorney who specializes in elder law. VMS serves its members by making available informative publications, and by obtaining low cost dignified after death services. Call 268-2181 for details.



THE GAP "SWEATSHOP PICKETS" IN FRESNO

This demonstration at the Fashion Fair mall in Fresno brought out between 40 and 50 participants. Representatives from SEIU, the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, the Carpenters Union, WILPF, and the California Faculty Association attended, as did some religious folks. So, it was a good mix of labor and community activists. The event, to protest the Gap's use of sweatshop labor, was sponsored by The Labor/Community Alliance. We need a coordinator for continuing, periodical, demonstrations at The Gap. Interested in this exciting "volunteer opportunity"? Call 226-0477 for more information.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS

Every Wednesday 7:30 PM

David Bacon's Labor Journal on KFCF 88.1 FM. David Bacon's experience as a union organizer and his world-wide contacts in the labor community make him uniquely qualified as a journalist specializing in issues and concerns of working people. He covers a broad range of labor news and issues locally, nationally and globally.

Fourth Friday 5:00-6:00 P.M.

Street Heat, KFCF 88.1-FM. Featuring Central Valley labor/community activists.

Mon & Thurs. 6:00-9:00 P.M.

Scalzo Talk, KAAT 103.1-FM. A radio program for unions, about unions and to union people. A radio program with a union voice. Interviews of local people on labor issues and political issues that deal with the working people.

Monday - Friday 9:00 AM

Democracy Now! On KFCF 88.1 FM. Amy Goodman, award-winning veteran journalist and host of Democracy Now!, subtitles this show "*The Exception to the Rulers*." It is an appropriate title, as the program covers news of the nation and world from a progressive viewpoint, with a focus on the history and economics of working people, women and people of color around the planet.

WEEKLY

Every Friday 9:00 A.M.-1:00 P.M.

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

Every Saturday

Food Not Bombs feeds the hungry near the Olive Avenue entrance to Roeding Park. Volunteers are needed to help cook food Saturday mornings, 9:30 AM at Sierra Vista United Methodist Church, corner of Maple and Illinois. Donations of good or almost good produce can be dropped off also. They are always in need of servers at the Park.

Every Wednesday 5:30 PM

The Chavez Committee meets at Denny's Banquet Room (Abby & Divisadero) and all interested persons are welcome to participate in planning this year's events honoring the life of Cesar Chavez. Call Ray at 439-8140.



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JOBS, JUSTICE -- JOY

By JoAnn Wypijewski

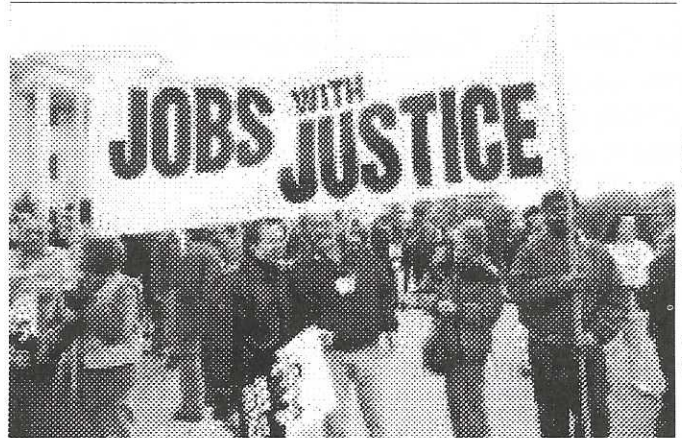
From "The Nation"

The drinks were pouring, the flesh was pressing and a "dream team" of brassy, bluesy, soul and salsa players out to affiliate San Antonio's Tejano bands with the American Federation of Musicians was raising the temperature on the last Saturday of February at the annual meeting of Jobs With Justice in Louisville, Kentucky. In the same room where, earlier in the day, Henry Nicholas, president of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees (AFSCME), had called on 650 conferees from thirty-six states and five countries to turn around the unions, the government and the politics of division-by-scarcity, labor guys told fish stories, lesbians draped arms about each other, foreign and homegrown activists—multihued, many-aged—spoke the international language of dance, and a machinist from Massachusetts told me, "What we're trying to do is turn our slogan from 'I'll be there' to 'We are there'—or at least, 'You be there.'"

Intensity of play, intensity of work; JWJ's trademark is joy in struggle. As its slogan suggests, the original mission of the organization—founded by labor activists frustrated by union complacency in the heat of the 1987 Eastern Airlines strike—was defense of besieged workers. Eleven years of protest, jail-going and close-to-the-roots coalition building later, it still gets union funding and is steered partly by central labor council leaders. But far from being an AFL-CIO auxiliary that rustles up allies for solidarity in a crisis, it has taken the lead as the only national fighting partnership of labor, community, religious, student and social movement movers for whom defense is not enough. At the conference, the accent was on offense; the talk all about picking a fight rather than waiting for it to pick you. And from lead figures to fresh activists, a question rarely heard was being raised, not lightly, not with illusions: Can we build a movement out of today's disparate campaigns? Can we articulate a liberating vision of human possibility and power over capital?

Implicit in the question was the knowledge that it would demand a strategic response. An unprecedented day long meeting of national privatization opponents began with the simple assumption that collective good trumps profits. Soon enough, things weren't simple at all. Small groups hashed things out, unionists and poor people's activists confronted their separate realities, the floor was alive with questions: How do you defend a public agency that's indefensible? Doesn't arguing for the superiority of public over private sector workers split the class? What happens to a strategy tying labor and consumer interests when the privateers' target is social services, when caseworkers, and "clients" over whom they have power, are not necessarily allies? How do you convince people that "the government is us" when everyone knows it certainly is not? How to imagine a different setup of public services?... a different setup of power?... a different government?

It's just one damn thing after another. No one had all the answers, but in the JWJ style of mass participation and linked but autonomous direction, the process for action



TYSON/KFC DEMONSTRATION-FEB. 26, '99

was rolling. Through the weekend, unionists challenged living-wagers to push their demands to cover all workers who produce goods paid for by a city's public dollars, wherever they live. Students challenged labor to extend the fight for "working families" to the Third World. Labor challenged community allies to form workers' rights boards, given that 50 percent of workers who organize into unions never get a contract. Preachers challenged execs, during a brief sit-in at Kentucky Fried Chicken, with their prayers. And the lesbians reminded everyone that there is no such thing as economic justice without human justice.

If there is to be a new anti-corporate mass movement in America, Jobs With Justice provides a space broad, deep and energetic enough for it to take root. Whether JWJ could be in the forefront of such a movement, whether it could project a transformative vision and be the advance guard of further institutional and ideological shift in organized labor—these are all unknowns. But for now it is the only national group reviving the long call for Jobs and Freedom, and doing so with a passion, toughness and intelligence that ought to induce anyone to "be there."

PATIENCE MILROD

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Valley Labor Chatter

By Pam Whalen

The California Faculty Association (CFA), which represents about 7,000 faculty members statewide and 450 at CSUF, recently voted on a new contract. The vote in Fresno was 171 to approve the contract and 35 votes against. Many CFA/CSUF members were surprised when statewide results showed that the proposed contract was rejected by a margin of 57 percent to 43 percent, with nearly 4,200 union members voting.

The faculty is upset because they have been working without a contract since last fall and the administration is demanding numerous concessions. The areas of major concern by faculty are the demands, by Chancellor Reed, to expand the merit pay system, remove department heads from the bargaining unit, and the administration's continued practice of replacing full time tenured professors with part time lecturers.

University of California graduate student employees may soon resume the strike for union recognition that they began in December. A 45 day cooling-off period has expired with no indication that the university is changing its position. The university maintains that it doesn't have to recognize the union because teaching assistants are students, not workers. The state's Public Employee Relations Board has ruled to the contrary several times, but the administration is appealing.

The Bitter with the Sweet:

The good news, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, is that union membership was up by more than 100,000 last year to a total of 16.2 million. *The bad news* is that this wasn't enough to keep up with an expanding workforce. So the organized sector dropped from 14.1 percent to 13.9 percent. Unions continued to do well among public employees, health care workers, and service workers, and among African Americans and Latinos. They did poorly in the private sector, where union membership dropped from 9.7 percent to 9.5 percent. The most heavily unionized state is now Hawaii, with 26.5 percent of its workforce organized; the least-unionized state is Arkansas, with 6.2 percent.

Who's on Welfare?

Forty-five percent of the world's population - 2.3 billion people - have the *same total wealth* as the world's richest 358 people, according to the AFL-CIO.

Workers Memorial Day will be celebrated in Fresno by a fund raiser for the **Workers Disaster Relief Fund**. The Central Labor Council plans to hold a tri-tip BBQ in downtown Fresno on April 28. The annual event seeks to draw public attention to the thousands of workers who are injured, and some killed, on the job every year.

Members of Service Employee International Union Local 752 voted by a wide margin to merge with **Local 535**. The vote, which was completed on February 26, was 499 yes to 74 no. Plans are now being discussed about how to increase the strength of the newly constituted Union.

The Central Labor Council will hold its annual "**Labor Leader of the Year**" dinner on Thursday May 6. This year's event will honor Iron Worker Delbert Braley for his life-long service to the union movement. Delbert will be retiring this year after 32 years in the union. The dinner will take place at the Golden State Plaza at the corner of Tulare and M Streets (the basement of the County Building). Proceeds will go to the CLC's Committee on Political Action. For tickets call 275-1151.

"Look for the Union Label"



2115 Mono • Fresno, CA 93721

Ph. 233-6174 • Fax 233-6175

Boycott Wells Fargo

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

BE A PROUD SPONSOR OF AN HONOR STUDENT IN TELPANECA

SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT HELPS NEEDY STUDENTS

By Mike Rhodes

During the last six years the Fresno/Telpaneca Sister City Association has been helping the youth in our Nicaraguan sister city stay in school and continue their education. As a result, most have been able to continue attending elementary school, more have finished high school than ever before, and a few are now attending college.

Hurricane Mitch put an early end to the school year in November of 1998. The devastation in the community was enormous but things are starting to get back to normal.

The sister city group has already sent some money for the scholarship project this year but not enough to fund the project as usual. "We spent a lot of time and effort raising money for hurricane relief and were able to send over \$5,000 in medicines immediately following the disaster," said Belinda Gurrerero, President of the Sister City Associations. "It was great to be able to respond to the medical emergency that followed the hurricane but now our group needs to focus its attention on the important ongoing need of education in Telpaneca."

Project supporters fund this program year after year because they care about the children in Telpaneca. "The children in our sister city are the hope of the future and the money we provide does make a difference," Gurrerero added. "It is the difference between attending school or working on the family farm. Sometimes it is the difference between attending high school or dropping out to start a family when

you are 15 or 16." The Scholarship Project gives the youth of Fresno's sister city an alternative to the grinding poverty which is a reality for all too many families. It gives hope for the future.

Last year the money raised was given directly to the parents' committees in three rural schools and the elementary school in Telpaneca. They decided to give the majority of Scholarship Project money to the rural hamlets of Pericon,

Santo Domingo, and Amucayan because they are the most needy. Reports indicate that the money has been well spent. The group has pictures of the students with new notebooks, copies of the grades, and stories about how important this project is in their lives. Last year they were able to help 73 students. Residents of Telpaneca have said that without this assistance 2/3 of these children could not have afforded to attend school.

The Fresno/Telpaneca Sister City Association is very efficient with the donations they receive - they say that about 90% of every

dollar is delivered to directly benefit students. This is possible because they have no administrative overhead and use all volunteer labor.

If you would like to help with the Scholarship Project this year you can send your contribution to:

The Fresno/Telpaneca Sister City Association
P.O. Box 4496 Fresno CA 93744. For more information call 226-0477.



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FRESNANS JOIN MILLIONS FOR MUMIA, APRIL 24

By Alvin Valeriano, Fresno Food Not Bombs

'There are innocent men and women on death row in this country. We know, for we were numbered among them. Many of us endured for years in the narrow and isolated confines of a barren cell designed to murder our spirits, as the State struggled to win legal sanction to steal our lives'...— part of a statement supporting Mumia and signed by 15 former death row inmates.

On March 6, eight activists from Fresno attended the Race for Justice conference at U.C. Berkeley, a gathering inspired by death row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal whom many consider the most well-known political prisoner in the U.S. today. We listened and participated in discussions such as: 'Workers Have the Power—Labor Action for Mumia'; 'Stopping the Death Penalty in California'; 'Mumia, Women Political Prisoners'; and 'Women's Activism—Forging the Connections'.

For me personally and as an immigrant, it was a very enlightening experience, listening and chatting with those advocating for the real underbelly of American democracy. Voices of the people came from: Pam Africa of the Intl. Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia; Leonard Weinglass, Chief Counsel of Mumia, Minister Keith Muhammad, Nation of Islam; Christina Vasquez Gutierrez, Social Justice Committee of St. Peter's Church; Paul McKim, Youth for Socialist Action; Fresnan Donna Larsen, mother of California death row inmate Keith Doolin; and Fresnan Alphonso Williams, an African-American, Vietnam vet, homeless, Food Not Bombs activist.

The thousand or so conference participants bolster the support for a new trial for Mumia that comes from tens of thousands around the world, including: Bishop Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela, the European Parliament, the National Parliament of Denmark, Paul Newman, Alice Walker, Sister Helen Prejean, Detroit Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, Dolores Huerta of the UFW; Rev. Jesse Jackson and many more.

Back in Fresno, Donna Larsen and eight of us who attended the conference shared our experience and insights with several activists from different organizations.

We are now organized as an ad hoc group of supporters for a new trial for Mumia.

Several events are being planned: video showings of "A Case of Reasonable Doubt," teach-ins at Fresno City College, informational house parties, a press conference of endorsing organizations, public readings of Mumia's published works such as *Live From Death Row*, and a hip hop/rap concert organized by high school students.

HELP US BY DOING ONE OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING THINGS:

- * Sign the petition for a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal.
- * Enlist organizations/churches you belong with to become endorsers for a new trial.
- * Join the April 24 mobilization in San Francisco.
- * Donate money to Mumia's legal defense fund.
- * Sponsor students and homeless people unable to pay for the April 24 bus ride (\$10 each).

Endorsements for a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal come from an impressive array of organizations, including a significant number of labor unions. The ILWU is even attempting to pass a resolution shutting down all ports on the West Coast on April 24 (Mumia's birthday). Such support adds potential allies to an ever more impressive list of individuals and organizations opposing the death penalty. Join us in saving Mumia and others on death row. For local information call 488-6545 or 266-5305.



THE ANNEXATION OF MEXICO FROM THE AZTECS TO THE IMF

By Vic Bedoian

From his roots in the Greenwich Village beat scene, through the civil rights and anti-war movements, to the Zapatista rebellion—John Ross has a remarkably intimate and comprehensive knowledge of Mexico. His on-the-scene coverage of the uprising in Chiapas in 1994 led to an American Book Award for *Rebellion from the Roots: Indian Uprising in Chiapas*. His current books are *The Annexation of Mexico: From the Aztecs to the IMF*, and a novel, *Tonatiuh's People, A Novel of the Mexican Catadysm*. When not reporting breaking news, writing books and speaking, John Ross is a performing poet.

KFCF radio and The Fresno Free College Foundation are sponsoring John Ross when he comes to Fresno on Friday, April 9th at 7:00 p.m. The lecture will be held in the Bonner Auditorium of the Fresno Art Museum at 2233 N First Street at Clinton. Cost is \$5 at the door. For more information call 559-233-2221.

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Ladies and Gentlemen, REMEMBER FOLKS, THIS MAN IS RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT

"I was recently on a tour of Latin America, and the only regret I have was that I didn't study Latin harder in school so I could converse with those people." ...J. Danforth Quayle

"If we don't succeed, we run the risk of failure."

J. Danforth Quayle

"Republicans understand the importance of bondage between a mother and child." ...Vice President Dan Quayle

"What a waste it is to lose one's mind. Or not to have a mind is being very wasteful. How true that is."

Vice President Dan Quayle

"The Holocaust was an obscene period in our nation's history. I mean in this century's history. But we all lived in this century. I didn't live in this century."

Vice President Dan Quayle, 9/15/88

"May our nation continue to be the **beacon** of hope to the world." The Quayles' 1989 Christmas card.

[Not a **beacon** of literacy, though.]

"Verbosity leads to unclear, inarticulate things."

Vice President Dan Quayle, 11/30/88

"I have made good judgements in the Past. I have made good judgements in the Future."...Vice President Dan Quayle

"The future will be better tomorrow."...V. P. Dan Quayle

"*People that are really very weird can get into sensitive positions and have a tremendous impact on history.*" Danny

"I stand by all the misstatements that I've made."

Vice President Dan Quayle to Sam Donaldson, 8/17/89

"*I love California*, I practically grew up in Phoenix."

Vice President Dan Quayle

"We are ready for any unforeseen event that may or may not occur." Vice President Dan Quayle, 9/22/90

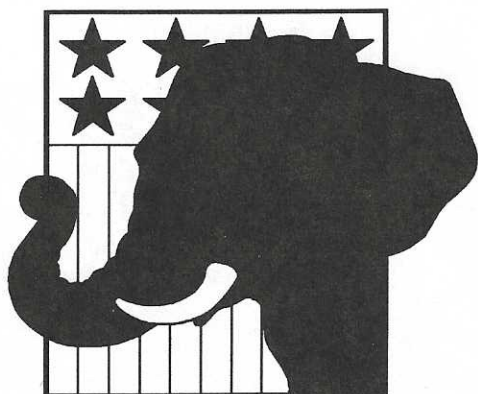
"I am not part of the problem. I am a Republican."

Vice President Dan Quayle

"A low voter turnout is an indication of fewer people going to the polls." Vice President Dan Quayle

"[It's] time for the human race to enter the solar system."

Vice President Dan Quayle



MORE QUALISIMS NEXT MONTH IF SPACE ALLOWS

STYLISH FUNDRAISING

By Phyllis Fess Baker

The Fresno Center for Nonviolence presents its annual spring fundraiser "Stylish Seconds" and Silent Auction. Raffle tickets will be sold for la de da items. What began in 1996 is now a Fresno tradition. Last year over 150 community members attended.

The style show features models of all ages, abilities and ethnic origins walking the runway dressed in previously owned designer clothing. The theme of the event is how to dress fashionably for less and how to recycle clothing to fund an updated wardrobe. Goodies are served and the entertainment is always unique.

The Center is home to dozens of activists and organizations working for peace. Since 1992, when the doors of the little house opened, Fresno has been blessed with a unified, gentle, yet vigorous voice advocating peaceful and just solutions to local, national and international disputes.

You or your union or organization can support the fundraiser in several ways. You can purchase a ticket and attend. You can donate an item of worth for the Silent Auction. It could be a gift certificate to your favorite eatery, movie tickets, a gift basket (coffee/tea, food, bath stuff, wine) or several hours of skill sharing (plumbing, carpentry, tutoring). Imagination is endless. A special way to offer support is to donate something grand enough to be 'live' auctioned. And, of course, you and all your members and friends can purchase lots of raffle tickets to increase your odds of winning one of those la de da prizes I mentioned.

Should you or yours feel moved to intentionally support a voice for peace in Fresno, give me a ring at 449-0893 (Phyllis).

1 May, 3:00 - 5:00 pm

College Community Congregational Church
(Social Hall)

5550 N. Fresno at Bullard

'Stylish Seconds' Fashion Show and Silent Auction
Tickets

cost \$8:00/\$10.00 at the door.

Raffle tickets cost \$1.00 each or \$5.00 for six.

For ticket purchases and ticket outlets phone me at
449-0893 or Angela Price at 435-6383.

Donations are tax deductible.

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REBUILDING PROSPERITY: LABOR'S AGENDA

By Randy Ghan, Exec. Secretary-Treasurer

Fresno, Madera, Tulare Kings Central Labor Council

Last November 3rd, California's electorate and more specifically, Labor and the working people of California, 'spoke up' at the ballot box and said "enough is enough". The last sixteen years, or the better part of the last generation, have left a legacy of anti-worker legislation that has burdened working families with less, not more, prosperity.

✂ The average family works 1.5 more days each week than in the 1970s. Unfortunately, this increased is not providing larger paychecks. Most California workers' real wages are lower than in 1979.

✂ California is first in the nation in its disparity between the rich and the poor. Good paying jobs with a future are disappearing and being replaced by temporary, part time and low paying positions, often within the underground economy.

✂ Since 1980, the poverty rate in California has increased 63%. Only six other states have a greater share of their populations living in poverty.

Now Labor is prepared to change the events of the past that brought the declining status of working people. Labor's electoral efforts last November paved the way for the path to change. Labor stands ready to assist its elected leaders with the work of rebuilding California's economic infrastructure, its workforce preparedness, and with all work necessary to give working families hope for their futures. The

tasks of changing economies directions and renewing hope for prosperity will be guided, in part, by Labor's recently developed Legislative Agenda for 1999. Each agenda item highlights a multifaceted intention to change legislation to improve prosperity for working people and for the California economy. The nine point agenda follows.

- ✂ Flexible work hours for working families.
- ✂ A living wage for California workers.
- ✂ Create jobs with a future.
- ✂ Family income protection.
- ✂ Equality on the job: No second class workforce.
- ✂ Advance the right to organize.
- ✂ No job ought cost you your health or your life.
- ✂ Quality Health Care for All.
- ✂ Education.

This agenda will be the road map to guide our legislative leadership down the yellow brick road to the land of prosperity for working families. A major phase begins as delegates of the State Federation of Labor descend upon California's capitol to encourage our legislators to support Labor's agenda. The delegates will meet at the Legislative Conference on March 22 and 23 in Sacramento.

We expect that our aggressive, progressive agenda will be the catalyst for change. The energy and enthusiasm of working people will motivate and hold accountable our legislators to renew prosperity for working families!

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Labor/Community Alliance

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- ✗ no benefits;
- ✗ no respect on the job?

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Madera, Tulare & Kings Counties
(559) 275-1151

Pam Whalen
Yolanda Guerra
Gerry Villero
SEIU Local 535
Public Employees, Health Care,
Social Services
(559) 261-9312

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

Doug Whipple
Local 701
Carpenters
(559) 268-3895

Kenneth McCormack
International Brotherhood of
Electrical Workers
Local 100
Electricians
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Al Madrigal, Jr.
United Steel workers of America
Manufacturing
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Jimmy Hammack
Teamster Local 431
(559) 486-5410

Dave Otero
Graphic Communications
International Union
Local 404
Printers
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Hotel Employees
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Local 19
Restaurant Workers
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