



Vic Bedoian, executive director of KFCF 88.1 FM

lished the first African-American newspaper in America, the Freedom Journal, to discuss the abolition of slavery. That, in turn, lead to the publication of a host of anti-slavery newspapers culminating in 1847 with the publication of Frederick Douglass's great hammer of abolition, The North Star, emblazoned with its mast head: "Right is of no sex—truth is of no color—God is the father of us all, and we are all brethren."

Like all great struggles, the fight for abolition inevitably forced Americans to confront other problems.

Jane Gray Swisshelm, who reported for the Spirit of Liberty, an abolitionist newspaper in Philadelphia, was the first woman allowed to sit in the gallery of the U.S. Senate. It was somehow natural that the struggle for abolition should lead to the struggle for women's suffrage, and that the suffrage movement should have its own press as well. The struggle for suffrage inevitably bumped up against the conditions of women in the garment in-



Abid Yahya and Nicholas Nocketback from The Undercurrent newspaper

dustry, particularly following the Triangle Waist Shirt fire in New York City where more than 140 women burned to death.

Which inevitably raised the issue of trade union rights, since only trade unions were willing to fight for safe working conditions and decent wages.

A host of women's publications, trade union newspapers, Yiddish language broad sheets, and political magazines sprang up. Many of these actually preceded the struggles they reported on. They were less mirrors than catalysts, writing about things that had only begun to develop.

When I.F Stone started the I.F. Stone Weekly in 1953 with the slogan "The third time they officially deny it, you know they are lying," it was in the middle of the McCarthy period and the deepest depths of the Cold War. Only a few progressive national publications were hanging on—the Nation, the New Republic, The National Guardian, and a handful of others. Stone's undertaking looked a bit quixotic at the time, but within a few years there was an explosion of the underground press—the Village Voice, the LA Free Press, the Berkeley Barb, the Kaleidoscope, the Quicksilver Times, and a host of others appeared in cities across the country.

Most of these publications came out initially to reflect the changing cultural conditions created by the Beats and jazz, but soon began to report on the Southern civil rights movement that the mainstream press was ignoring. When the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s home in Birmingham, Alabama was bombed in 1963 the only northern reporter in the state was African-American reporter Carl Bloice from the left-wing People's World.

But the alternative media, which also included the invaluable Pacifica Foundation, created a reality through their reporting that the mainstream could not continue to ignore. And so the northern press began covering the fight against segregation, and when it did, the walls of legal segregation came tumbling down.

Let me give you one small example from my own history.

I remember a CBS News film clip from 1963. It was Walter Cronkite—probably the most famous TV journalist of our generation—climbing out of the navigator's seat of a F105 Thunder Chief that had just finished bombing some National Liberation Front fighters in the Mekong Delta. He interviewed the pilot and commented "We did some good work out there today, didn't we, captain?" The man agreed, and Cronkite signed off from the front.

Five years later I saw the CBS News Special of Cronkite

Continued on page 25



Bill Balsley, Bryan Jessup, and Ruth Austin enjoy the evening



Lydia Flores and Andy Hart listen to one of the evenings speakers



Mike Rhodes is the editor of the Community Alliance newspaper



The event was held at the Full Circle Brewery



Rych Withers, the president of the Fresno Free College Foundation (owner and operator of KFCF 88.1 FM) congratulated the Community Alliance newspaper for publishing during the past ten years.



Gail and Everett Gaston

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Food Fight

By Michael Leonard

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are a reality in today's world. Their exact definitions, extent of their use, and potential health risks are also real uncertainties. Still, state and federal politicians continue to put the interests of the agriculture industry before communities.

Two specific areas of debate are the extent of local governments' control over the crops in their districts, and the information that consumers are given about the food they buy. The decisions will impact agriculture from seed to store shelf.

Last year, Senator Dean Florez, D-Shafter, introduced S.B. 1056. Its primary concern was reducing air pollution in the state, particularly in the San Joaquin Valley. The Senate approved it 31-8 in June. A month later, in what appears to be an example of "gut and amend," Florez offered a new version of the bill that, quite literally, crossed out all content pertaining to air pollution and replaced it with a lot of language regarding seeds. Now the legislation asserts that, after July 1, 2006, policy on the sale and use of seeds and nursery stock is of state domain and operates "to the exclusion of local regulations." This could prevent localities from following counties like Mendocino and Santa Cruz that have banned genetically modified crops within their limits.

Several groups oppose S.B. 1056, including SF Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility. President Robert M. Gould, M.D., said, "[I]t is...a fundamental issue of allowing the existence of local policies that are more protective of health and the environment than state or federal standards."



The Organic Consumers Association, on its website, expressed the concern that "it will override future restrictions on genetically engineered crops and seeds." The group organized statewide call-ins to the Assembly throughout August against what they call "the Monsanto Bill."

The agricultural giant owns the rights to most of the genetically modified seeds used on American farms, and its interest in S.B. 1056 was suspected. Monsanto Spokesperson Chris Horner said, "There is a misconception that we are directly involved...(the bill) is broad-based and a lot bigger than one company. It was not one company's initiative." He explained that Monsanto is a company "strictly involved in agriculture. Farmers are our customers." Thus, the business's interest is that farmers have access to the best technology available, as well as clarity on and freedom to choose from products that have already undergone stringent federal safety tests. Banning such products on a local level, Monsanto believes, limits that clarity and freedom.

Horner added, "It is a dead issue for us." He noted two organizations that were directly supporting S.B.1056, the California Farm Bureau Federation (CFBF) and the California Seed Association.

The bill was approved by the state Assembly 51-24 on August 24, 2006. It then went to Senate, where it landed in "unfinished business" with the legislative session's end. An October 12 article in the *Fresno Bee* cited that Senator Florez plans to introduce a "multi-issue bill" in January. A spokesperson in his office said that S.B. 1056 will not be part of the new bill's language and that the Senator has not indicated if he will re-introduce it at all in the next session. Not yet explained, however, is what prompted Florez to ditch a successful effort and return with a more controversial proposition in the first place.

On the national level, H.R. 4167 is also idling while Congress is out of session. Passed by the House of Representatives in March, it was referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labors, and Pensions where it will be analyzed and possibly voted on by the Senate.

The "National Uniformity for Food Act" would establish a standardized food labeling system across the 50 states. California has its own stringent practice since 1986's



Proposition 65. The plan, as explained in a recent AlterNet article, "prompted food corporations to make changes nationwide, since no company wanted to create a separate package for food sold in the most populous state. Because many companies felt it would look better to simply remove some ingredients than to say their products contained carcinogens, the law has led to the phase out of some 750 chemicals, according to California's attorney general." H.R. 4167 would force California to ignore Proposition 65 in favor of lax federal regulations more appealing to Big Agriculture businesses.

In an e-mail, Senator Dianne Feinstein explained her opposition to the measure: "H.R. 4167 prohibits localities from enacting food safety regulations that are stronger than those required by the federal government. It also prevents state and local governments from filling gaps in food safety laws when the federal government has no warning standards for a food product."

Wes Rolley, Organizer for the Rural Greens Caucus of the California Green Party, summed up the repercussions of the two bills on both chow and culture, "If localities can't block state rulings, and states can't label their own food...it equals free reign for Big Agriculture to do whatever they want."

For more information on S.B.1056 and agricultural issues, including genetic engineering, go to www.organicconsumers.org or www.cfbf.com.

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Leonard is a graduate student in the Media Studies Program at New College of California in San Francisco, and an independent journalist.

No More Stolen Lives!

On October 22, 2006 a march to stop police brutality went from Justice Corner (C and Fresno street) to the new amphitheater across from the Fresno Police Department (FPD). Many of the marchers were family members who had lost loved ones at the hands of the FPD. At the amphitheater, testimony was given by the family members about their sons, brothers, or husband's stolen life.



Murder on B Street. The family pictured above had their loved one killed one block from where the march started. The young man who was killed had failed to raise his hands fast enough. The police said they thought he had a gun, shot, and killed him. Of course, he did not have a gun. There are many sad stories about stolen lives in Fresno. The police shot and killed one woman here because she had an ax and was in a car lot. They shot one young man who was suspected of having stolen some beer. He started to drive off and was shot multiple times. The police claim they heard a gun shot, which they later claimed "might have been" a backfire from an automobile.



The family of Everardo Torres spoke about the injustice that ended his life. Torres was arrested and put in the back of a Madera Police Department car. While he was in custody and handcuffed in the back of the cruiser a police officer opened the door and shot him through the heart



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

WILPF Fresno, PO Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755

WILPF Page for November compiled by Ellie Bluestein geneb@csufresno.edu

Graphic by Lincoln Cushing

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 1, Wednesday, noon to 1:00 p.m.
Women in Black at Courthouse downtown.

November 9, Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
Regular WILPF meeting at Center for Nonviolence (1584 N. Van Ness). All members urged to attend

Thursday, November 16, noon till 1:00 p.m.
Women in Black Silent Vigil at CSUF Free Speech area.
All WILPF members invited—bring a friend.

Thursday, November 10, 1:00 p.m.
Faire Committee meeting
486 W. San Ramon #101 (229-9807)

Thursday, November 16, 3:00 p.m.
Stir it Up with WILPF on KFCF

Saturday, December 2, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
WILPF 2006 HOLIDAY PEACE CRAFT FAIRE
First Congregational Church, 2131 N. Van Ness

Please send news and articles and photos for the December WILPF page to Meta Schettler by November 15. <dr_schettler@yahoo.com

HELP FOR THE FAIRE

We're off to a great start. Ingrid has sent out contracts to vendors. Those wanting tables may contact her at ingridcarmean@sbcglobal.net or 225-8491. Julie Young-Andrews will again be coordinating the food. Nancy Waidtlow and Janet Capella are handling the White Elephant table. Linda Dryden is arranging music performances. Call Joan Poss (227-6134) and Ellie Bluestein (229-9807) to volunteer time and food contributions. We need strong hands for helping with early set-up and late afternoon take-down. Alvora Trujillo has volunteered to be in charge of coordinating volunteers at the Faire. Our greatest need now will be publicizing the event and bringing lots of people. Contact Marilyn Byrne if you can help with that. She has flyers. (skippy41@csufresno.edu or 301-6676). We can use baked goods, preserves, produce, plants, handmade items, for sale at the WILPF table. We look forward to a great Faire, as always.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Membership chair, Vickie Fouts, has been sending out renewal notices to members who are behind in dues, or lapsed. We hope you will renew your membership and enjoy the benefits of a subscription to our national WILPF publication, PEACE AND FREEDOM, a subscription to Community Alliance News, access to our WILPF list serve (fresnowilpf@lists.riseup.net) and of course participation in our decision making and events. Membership dues may be sent to WILPF at P.O. Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755. Questions may be addressed to Vickie at socialjustice@sti.net or by phone at 658-8260.

Lynn Graham (495-0264 or 215-1548) is in charge of our telephone tree and needs volunteer callers. Please volunteer to help her. We use the phone tree sparingly, but it is very important for those members who do not use e-mail. With just a few volunteers the task is not time consuming. Kudos to Su Kapoor for his organizing efforts on the Gandhi birthday celebration and Stop the Hate.

RAGING GRANNIES

The Raging Grannies was the culminating act at the Fresno Free College Foundation/KFCF annual banquet. Their four songs were well received, bringing the entire audience to their feet, singing along, and holding hands for the last song, "Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream."

RUTH OBEL JORGENSEN, former WILPF intern and Branch Secretary, was interviewed for: "Tracked in America: Stories from the History of U.S. Government Surveillance," which examines the history of surveillance in America through the personal stories of 25 individuals directly affected by surveillance and the historical perspective of six notable historians. It is a series created by the ACLU to be distributed to schools, organizations, community groups, around the country. Ruth's part in the series is based on her experiences as a student leader of the peace group at CSUF, when they were subjected to

surveillance by the police and boldly and fearlessly initiated actions against the surveillance, resulting eventually in a pledge from President Welty that it would not be allowed.

For information about the series: Ravi Garla at rgarla@aclunc.org or call 415-621-2493, x332.

A DIALOGUE FOR A JUST IMMIGRATION REFORM
Sponsored by Pan Valley Institute of the American Friends Service Committee and the Coalition for Immigrant Rights of the Central Valley. September 29-October 1. Attended by Vickie Fouts on behalf of our branch. Excellent meeting, in Spanish with English translation for the two non-Spanish speakers. The purpose of the event was to establish relationships with different Central Valley organizations and to identify barriers and create strategies toward the struggle of just immigration policies.

The group came away with short and long term plans. The long term plan is to get legalization for all immigrants. The short term plans include working with the media and congress members until the election and then until congress goes back to work again, on such issues as not building a border wall, having an ID picture in order to vote, signing up new registered voters and seeing that they vote. Vickie will make a full report and ask members to visit congress people and donate funds to help with the effort. Vickie says it was a terrific experience. Wonder Valley Ranch was a great place to have the conference, and it was funded by grants from several foundations, enabling people to attend at no cost, and in some cases paying travel expenses. Vickie hopes that other social justice groups will consider applying for grants in order to provide events where all who wish can attend no matter what their economic situation.

The facilitator for the gathering was Francisco Herrera from San Francisco. Francisco is a musician and used his guitar music and singing as a wonderful organizing tool throughout the gathering. Mark Silverman, Director of Politics for the Immigrant Legal Resource Center in San Francisco, was a guest speaker and gave an overview of the current status of immigrant issues in Congress. He plans on returning to Fresno soon to present a workshop on how Congress works when it comes to getting bills passed.

Thanks for attending, Vickie

KUDOS TO STEVE SACKS for the great job he did in organizing a full page ad in "The Fresno Bee" urging our exit from Iraq. Many organizations, including WILPF, sponsored the ad and of course many individuals contributed to the cost.

WOMEN IN BLACK

by Marilyn Byrne and Meta Schettler

Women in Black have expanded to the CSUF Campus to protest the war in Iraq from noon to 1:00 the third Thursday of each month. The next demonstration will be Thursday November 16th. We welcome the general public and

encourage more WILPF members to join us. Initially started in 1988 by Israeli women in response to the Israel-Palestine conflict, Women In Black vigils have spread throughout the world. Women stand in silent vigil to protest war, rape as a tool of war, ethnic cleansing and human rights abuses all over the world. Women in Black is a world-wide network of women committed to peace with justice and actively opposed to injustice, war, militarism and other forms of violence. As women experiencing these things in different ways in different regions of the world, we support each other's movements. An important focus is challenging the militarist policies of our own governments. We are not an organization, but a means of communicating and a formula for action. Please wear black & bring a sign!

Co-sponsored by WILPF & Campus Peace & Civil Liberties. Please contact Meta Schettler for more information, 278-4593.

I urge you to come out and join us.. It is a very healing experience. I have included a poem describing my experience.

Standing for Peace

Marilyn Byrne

From 12:00 to 1:00
against the rhythm of lunch traffic
in the center of the Free Speech Area
on the CSUF Campus. I stand
the one on the far left
in a straight line opposing
the college's semicircular platform.
A Woman in Black in silence
I hold a sign:
U.S. Foreign Policy Causes Terrorism.

I wait anticipating
the signal my hour passed,
while student's browse
like shoppers in a Mall.
Oblivious some remain
extensions of their cell phones.
Others stop to collect handouts.
My eyes search
the crowd across the table
attempting contact.

The sun cooks
my head as water droplets rise bubbling
from my forehead. My hair falls
into my face attaching
like glue to the gloss on my lips. I feel
drops of sweat creep
down my back. I move
up and back to shake
needles from my feet. My sign tilts
as I raise my hand to brush
the hair from my lips.

The campus clock chimes once.



Dixie Salazar and Angela Price at last year's WILPF Craft Faire. This year, the Peace Community Craft Faire will be held December 2 (10 am to 4 pm) at the First Congregational Church.

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THE WELCH REPORT

By Jack H. Welch, M.D.



FOUR REALITIES & 20 ACTIONS FOR IRAQ

The first reality with regard to Iraq is "There are no more brilliant ideas that can fit on a one-page policy paper and get us out of this mess". So said Gen. Anthony Zinni, retired from the US Marine Corps, speaking to the world Security Institute board of directors and staff in May 2006 in Washington D.C.

The second reality is "that we aren't pulling out". If you think that we can just walk away—"you can't". The third reality is recognizing that Iraq is not a 1- or 2- year problem— It's actually a 5- to 7- year problem.

The fourth reality is that, instead of drafting a brilliant strategic paper, we should start burrowing into the detailed actions of what must be done in the political, economic, security, and social areas to reconstruct Iraq. For this to succeed, the institutions in Iraq must be strengthened to stand up to the current chaos and instability; their institutions and the people have to be bolstered and made to believe.

20 ACTIONS

The writer's first recommendation is to build a set of international advisory groups that have experience, knowledge and understanding of how to structure federations, how to formulate revenue sharing, and how to distribute and work autonomously. An information campaign is needed to sell to the Iraqi people why it's in their interest to see this unity government succeed, to see the issues they're going to have to come to grips with work. There is need to have a mediation effort with the insurgents, with some of whom (not disaffected Sunnis) a line of communication can be built.

We are building a military that will have over 300,000 Iraqis, which need the obvious military capabilities but also an intelligence capability. There needs to be a humanitarian component to our presence in Iraq, including medical, veterinarian and civic action projects. Also in terms of security there should be an alternative to the militias (which we should not have allowed): an option of a "territorial guard", meaning one gets a decent paycheck for specific tasks.

On the economic side, there is need for a system in the region to bring together Iraqis who want to establish their businesses with international investors to work out the kinds of businesses that could be promoted and developed. The author also would recreate a healthcare system within Iraq.

One of the things that works well is the creation of a formalized dialogue process. The Saudis have created such a dialogue program in which King Abdullah engages the people by talking about reforms and change on the public media. A series of youth programs should be begun where young Shia, Sunnis, Kurds and other minorities are brought together. A "brain drain" that is going on in Iraq needs to be reversed. Ideas from distinguished retired people in the US could be sought.

CONCLUSION

"What we need now is detailed thinking of these realities. What we had better understand... is that the key is the Iraqi people... You can't work this by simply thinking this is a security problem, by creating more military forces, building them in our image and sending them out to kill, and think that's going to work." (That was Vietnam.) "It is time now to say that the one element that's holding this together, the Iraqi people, have to be brought into this process, and actions taken to give them some sense of hope for their future." (Source: Gen. (ret.) Anthony Zinni, USMC, Distinguished Military Fellow, The Defense Monitor, July/August 2006.)

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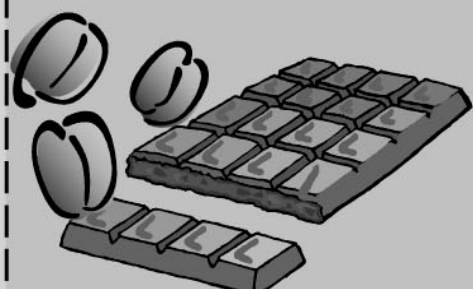
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Second Wednesday Video Series:

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Why We Fight

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Noon & 7:00 p.m. – FCNV

Join us for a potluck at 6:30 p.m.

A Modern Modest Proposal

by Sara Jane Olson: with Caren Hill, J.S., and April Watson.

A lifer, watching another lifer walking away to her housing unit, commented, “She just got a four-year rollover from the Board.” What she meant was that the woman had appeared before the Board of Parole Hearings to be considered for parole. Not only had she been denied a parole date, she has to wait another four years before she comes up for another parole hearing.

The lifer said, “A lot of women are getting multi-year denials. It’s really common now. Some of us lifers are thinking of writing to Governor Schwarzenegger to ask him, if the state is never going to let us out, to commute our life sentences to Death Penalties. We don’t want to live in prison for another 20 years. We’d rather die. At least we’d have a choice.”

Another woman, who has a 30-to-life sentence, is going to turn 55 years old on her next birthday. She says, “If I don’t win my writ, I don’t intend to spend years living in here. I intend to help myself die. I wish I had another choice.”

It is a given in California’s prison industry (California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation / CDCR) that a life sentence may as well be a life-without-possibility-of-parole term. Whether one gets 15-to-life, 25-to-life, 75-to-life plus “enhancements” of 20 years or more, it’s all the same. The odds in favor of a grant of release, before one has fermented for two times the number in the “— —to-life” judgment in the state’s “Injustice Stew”, are virtually nil.

It doesn’t matter who is elected governor or what political party prevails in the State Assembly or in the Senate. “Tough on Crime” and “Three Strikes (even for shoplifting) Means Life” attitudes have a near-genetic grip on the psyches of all elected officials and the general population of the state.

To win freedom, a prisoner must find some way to go to court, usually with the aid of a volunteer attorney from such groups as Justice Denied or an Innocence Project. Few prisoners have any money for a lawyer or the education to represent themselves. Courts rarely rule in a prisoner’s favor. Well over 95% of appeals or Writs of Habeas Corpus brought by prisoners are denied.

Schwarzenegger has allowed a few people out of prison after a court has ruled in their favor when they’ve appealed a parole board denial. Gray Davis, former Democratic governor, was so enthralled by the generous donations to his campaign for governor from the powerful prison guards’ union (California Correctional Peace Officers Association / CCPOA), he declared, “no one convicted of murder would get out of prison while he was in office.” He kept his word. There is no redemption in a California governor’s type of Christianity, at least for prisoners.

Prisoners must go before the Board of Parole Hearings (BPH) to plead for a release date. The Board’s former title, the Board of Prison Terms, changed on July 1, 2005, was far more apt. Prison terms is what the Board is all about. It is composed entirely of victims rights groups and former prison industry and law enforcement personnel. Crime victims’ relatives populate the victims’ right groups. They cannot be objective. This makes sense. Who could be? Most relatives of crime victims are incapable of forgiveness and it should not be expected of them. They are already allowed to appear before the BPH and to argue against release considerations for their targeted prisoners. However, because they cannot forgive, they should not be members of the BPH. But they are.

Despite a large amount of press attention to reformation policies in the California prison industry, only a tiny fraction of television segments about prison reform that provide the culture’s predominant persuasive pressure on the public have ever been broadcast. There’s no political capital or advertising money in compassion for prisoners. Dehumanization, ridicule and fear mongering are the qualities that rate the pots of gold. Lip service for prison reform is nice, but in a political system dominated by corporate lobbyists and monopolized media, it’s not cool.

Generally speaking, most lifers are never going to get out of prison and captivity costs the state billions of

taxpayer dollars per year. As long as the War on Drugs persists, arrests won’t decline. The prison industry will grow and grow and cost more and more. Sentences will get longer and longer and releases fewer and farther between denials. Elected political officeholders will never have the courage to reform a cruel system because it guarantees reelection. It must be mentioned that they are all very afraid of the prison guards’ uber union and its power as well. A terrified public will never condone widespread accommodation of former felons in their communities. Therefore, here is a modest proposal that some inmates dreamed up to help reform the prison industry that Californians may accept.

In California, the average prisoner costs \$34,000 per year to maintain WITHOUT rehabilitative, humane medical and dental, or less-than-overcrowded housing programs. As lifers and LWOPs (Life With Out Parole) age, they become decrepit and disabled and cost taxpayers EVEN MORE. After much thought and creative riffing, a number of prisoner-inspired possibilities emerged that will end inmates’ lifestyles of incarcerated despair while earning income for prisoners’ families and the state. The potential for lucrative entertainment franchises is huge as well.

People who are convicted as lifers and LWOPs have committed dangerous crimes, usually concluding with a victim’s death. A prisoner in the CDCR / CCPOA / BPH realm is forever the being she was at the moment of the act(s) for which she was convicted or pled guilty. A prisoner is always dangerous.

Therefore, a prisoner hunt offers superb opportunities for sport, entertainment and money-raising for the state and its citizens while it promises a quick, relatively painless death for the prisoner prey. No faulty anesthetic procedures or wimpy anesthesiologists fearful they might have to intervene in an execution “gone wrong”. All there is to it is a clean bullet through the brain from a high-powered rifle, thank you!

The state can charge at least \$1,000,000 per hunt. Another prospect, once the sport has caught on, is a bidding procedure. The highest bid wins the hunt. The price could rise well beyond \$1,000,000. Obviously this is a sport that can be undertaken only by the very rich. However, lobbying groups such as the National Rifle Association or Focus on the Family might hold fund-raising contests for which the winning prize could be - voila! - a prisoner hunt. These groups could rake in millions.

The majority of the hunt fee will go to the state to augment the prison budget. However, the prey could earn a specific small percentage to be willed either to loved ones or the prisoner’s chosen charity.

Prey are selected on a volunteer-only basis. A mechanism must be devised to prevent any prisoner being forced or intimidated into “volunteering against her will”. No wheelchair-bound prisoners may apply. Volunteers with minor disabilities may be acceptable if they don’t impair movement. A prisoner is ineligible for the hunt if she is disabled or ill.

Policies that prepare volunteer prey for the hunt should be instituted to insure the most exciting contest. Health screening, better diet, and exercise programs would prepare the prey for a topnotch performance.

Threshold criteria should be developed to choose appropriate volunteers:

1. BPH rollover for a certain amount of years after several release denials
2. Four outright denials
3. More than one parole board refusal by the governor; perhaps after the second refusal following a BPH grant of release
4. In the case of a sentence longer than 25-to-life; for instance, let’s say 32-to-life is the sentence and the first BPH appearance results in the denial of parole
5. Exhaustion of appeals leading to no hope of release
6. * * The HUNTER must be a CRACK SHOT * *

Recently, for the first time in nearly four decades, it has been suggested that prisoners be used as subjects for drug tests by multinational pharmaceutical corporations. Although a prisoner would be remunerated for voluntary participation in such tests, even posing this idea leads one to the conclusion that, not only does the system of imprisonment dehumanize an inmate, but the entire American culture does as well. Therefore, inmates who volunteer and qualify to participate in the hunt will earn a Certificate of Official Human Being signed by the current governor.

More ideas include:

1. A public contest to name the hunt, e.g., “Survivor: Chowchilla”
2. Television rights to broadcast the hunt live could be sold by CDCR for a massive amount of money
3. Live broadcasts could lead to the development of a television series, e.g., “Stories from the Hunt”
 - a. The prey’s back/story
 - b. The hunter’s back/story
 - c. The prey’s family’s story. “What are they gonna do with the money?”
 - d. the hunter’s family’s back/story. “He always wanted to do something like this.”
 - e. The prey’s guards’ stories
 - f. The guards’ families’ stories . . . and on and on and on . . .
4. A television program could become the catalyst for a major movie or even a movie series.
5. Rights to video games, books, comic books, toys and Halloween costumes.

A course designed for maximum sport with hiding places, lots of foliage, groves of trees and numerous water hazards can add to the thrill. Under no circumstances may the prey be armed or wield arms of any kind. Although highly, even prohibitively, unlikely, the hunt course could include a line, a boundary of some sort, over or beyond which, IF a volunteer prey crosses, she can be freed. The chances of this occurring MUST be negligible, of course.

Several prisoners suggested that Dr. Jack Kevorkian would be an excellent in-prison hunt supervisor. Perhaps he could be extradited to California in order to act in this capacity. Others came up with the idea that, if a lifer or LWOP, after the age of 50 years, is not able to be considered for volunteer prey, the lifer’s bunk may be swapped for a coffin. That way, a lifer will get used to sleeping in one because that’s where she’ll spend eternity as there’s no real bed in her future.

Several prisoners voiced an aversion to being hunted; too traumatic. They thought that they would like to be given the opportunity to sell thir bodies for organ harvest. This would go over big with the anti-stem cell development people, like the President. Again, there could be a bidding procedure for those who are a physiological match with the volunteer organ donor. The volunteer must be Hep C and HIV negative and drug free. During the final 90 days of life, organ donors might, besides improved health care, diet and exercise, receive top-flight body care products in order to prepare superficial body parts for . . . oh . . . skin grafts, tips for nail salons, and hair for wigs, weaves and extensions.

A California lifer’s sentence is like a terminal illness. As time passes, it doesn’t get easier. In fact, as the years go by, it gets worse and worse. Prisoners often view, with amusement, the option of commuting a death sentence to life-without as a step up in human rights terms. It may be a step up for a Death-Penalty-hungry public but not necessarily for a prisoner; not really.

On July 1, 2005, the CDC added the word “rehabilitation” to its title. Still, there’s no rehabilitation for lifers and LWOPs. This makes sense. If they’re never going to get out, why bother?

With a hunt or organ sale, prisoners rehabilitate themselves. They give back to society that they so grievously harmed that they may never walk among law-abiding citizens again. They get a bonus for their families or groups in their former communities to help those who come after, lending a hand to the next generation. Help prisoners help themselves. Hunt them. Shoot them. Set them free!

Sara Jane Olson W94197 506-10-04Low C.C.W.F.
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The Inside Track: Patronage, Cronyism at Fresno Unified

By Larry Moore

The local business elites who see themselves as the wise leaders of our fair community are pouring their school board campaign contributions – more than \$80,000 as of Sept. 30 – into a series of slick, mailbox-stuffing flyers. Radio and television commercials featuring Assemblymember Juan Arambula are airing daily across the dial. The *Fresno Bee* has predictably endorsed the Autry-Arambula slate in its entirety.

And, their business-media coalition's political strategy of union-bashing at public events has intensified, exceeding even the attacks Governor Schwarzenegger launched at teachers and other public employees in last year's special election fiasco (see *Arambula story, this page*). While Proposition 74 against teachers and Proposition 75 targeting unions failed statewide, they passed here at home.

Arambula apparently feels he is free to demonize teachers and every other school employee as a way to garner votes for his slate of candidates. Ironically, he stood before hundreds of those same workers last November at a Get Out the Vote rally and urged us on to victory, pledging his support and solidarity.

Meanwhile, the "run-it-like-a-business" crowd who seek to impose on Fresno Unified their vision of a top-down, CEO-driven corporate model are beginning to dip their straws into the district coffers, moving from their positions as unbiased civic leaders into highly paid employees and consultants.

This stands in stark contrast to the school district's stated "Community Values of the Fresno Region" (Choosing Our Future, January 2005):

Conflict of Interest: We agree to disclose any personal or professional conflict of interest that may affect our objectivity before engaging in work that will impact the community. We seek to avoid even the appearance of impropriety.

The two most prominent examples are Nancy Richardson and Kurt Madden. Both served on the FUSD Superintendent's Advisory Task Force in 2004 which issued the Choosing Our Futures report. Before the report was even finished, Richardson was hired on as an independent contractor to assist the superintendent "in forming community alliances" for six months at \$57,000. She has contributed \$4,000 to this year's Autry-Arambula slate.

Kurt Madden started Oct. 1 as the district's new chief technology officer. His salary range is \$106,357 to \$129,277. He came from the faith-based One by One Leadership nonprofit organization.

Two other members of the nine-member 2004 Task Force were Peter Weber and Deb Nankivell. FTA attempted to confirm reports of private consulting contracts with Weber and Nankivell directly as individuals or indirectly through private consulting and nonprofit firms but was rebuffed by Fresno Unified. Consulting contracts for less than \$15,000 per year do not require school board approval and do not appear on board agendas or minutes. The district refused a recent request to physically inspect its contracts.

Richardson, Madden, Weber and Nankivell gather and work together at both the Fresno Business Council (www.fresnobc.org) and Fresno Citizens for Good Government (www.fcgg.org). One recent act of "good government" successfully advocated for by this "citizens" group was privatization of the Selland Arena and convention center. Predictably, a sizable number of union jobs with decent pay and benefits were lost.

The lists of directors and founders of both organizations overlap heavily, and are repeated almost in their entirety when cross-referenced with the campaign contribution reports of the Autry-Arambula "Voices for Excellence" PAC.

As if to affirm their faith in themselves and their good works, both organizations proudly proclaim the "Community Values of the Fresno Region" found in the district report. At the top of their list of values is this statement:

Stewardship: We will lead and follow as stewards of our region, caring responsibly for our community assets. We will work together to achieve the greatest, long-term benefit for the community as a whole.

Noble words, but when laid next to their actions and political philosophy, it becomes clear their vision of care and stewardship for community assets has ominous implications for the interests of working families.

Arambula: Spanish for 'Arnold'?

Local Democrat Attacks Working Families, Right to Organize
By Larry Moore

Democratic Assemblymember Juan Arambula has taken more than a page from the neo-con playbook. He appears to have swallowed it whole. In a recent tirade on right-wing radio, he attacked everything from workers' right to organize, to pensions for public employees. One had to hear it to believe it.

Given Arambula's oft-proclaimed humble beginnings, the countless hours that working class Fresnans have volunteered on his behalf and the hard-earned dollars they have contributed to his political races, it was a stunning betrayal.

Arambula appeared on the Ray Appleton show on KMJ 580 in mid-October to discuss the Fresno Unified School Board election. Kevin Hall, FTA Associate Executive Director, was there to represent the voices of teachers, school nurses and librarians.

At issue were school board candidates Michelle Arax Asadoorian, Valerie Davis, Cal Johnson and Dr. Tony Vang, who have been endorsed by FTA, California School Employees Association, Service Employees International Union and the Central Labor Council, versus the 2006 Autry-Arambula slate endorsed by a coalition of local businessmen (see *Community Alliance*, October 2006).

Arambula is also apparently willing to put his money where his mouth is — at least money that others have given to him, including the very unions he's attacking. As of Sept. 30 he had contributed \$5,000 from his Arambula for Assembly account to the Voices for Executives in Education PAC.

To hear Arambula imitate Arnold, go to www.fresnoteachers.org and click on "2006 School Board Debate" or contact kevin@fresnoteachers.org.

Follow the Buck

Major campaign contributions to the Autry-Arambula slate as of Sept. 30, 2006, as reported to the Fresno County Clerk's Office, Recipient Committee Campaign Statements, are:

\$10,000 Level
Samuel Reeves

\$8,000
Donaghy Sales LLC

\$5,000
Arambula for Assembly 2006
Amy Arambula
Granville Homes Inc.
Lyles Diversified Inc.
River Park Properties II
Richard Spencer
Van-G Trucking Inc.

\$4,000
Nancy Richardson

\$3,000
Willa M. Correll

\$2,000
Peter Weber

\$1,000
Coke Hallowell
Sun-Maid Growers
Corporate Aircraft
Bennett Frost Personnel Services
DeYoung Properties – Team 5
Gunner & Andros Investments
Richard Johanson
Generation Homes
US Properties, LLC
American Ambulance
Diana S. Dooley
Ruiz Food Products Inc.

(Computer science teacher Larry Moore is president of the Fresno Teachers Association)

Vote For Change



Cal Johnson
Edison High, District 1
Special Needs Programs

Having worked in our local Community College system for more than three decades, Cal is an expert in programs designed to help students with special needs, including assistance for students with learning and physical disabilities. Elected by the members of the California School Employees Association to the community college district's Personnel Commission Board, he is an administrator who has earned the respect, trust and endorsement of school employees



Valerie Davis
Sunnyside High, District 3
Parents and Student Engagement

A credentialed teacher with 20 years of elementary, middle and senior high school experience and a two-year incumbent on the school board, Valerie will continue to involve parents in the decisions that affect their children's education – like class sizes and school safety. She is known to parents, teachers and students throughout the district for her tireless commitment to visiting schools and learning firsthand about their needs to create the best possible learning environment



Dr. Tony Vang
McLane High, District 4
Bilingual Student Expert

A CSU Fresno Professor of Education and specialist in classroom strategies for English Language Learners, "Dr. Tony" as he is known throughout Fresno's Hmong-American community emigrated from Laos and learned English at age 17. He understands the needs of bilingual students and their non-English speaking parents. He trains new and current teachers in effective classroom methods, and as a School Board member provides a critical voice for this important constituency.



Michelle Arax-Asadoorian
Bullard High, District 7
Reading Intervention Specialist

A parent of three daughters who have attended Fresno Unified schools and a teacher and administrator for 16 years with the district, Michelle is the lead teacher in an intensive reading intervention program for first graders. She understands the critical importance of helping children in small groups at their level. She will bring the direct classroom experience to the school board that is necessary to evaluate the current administration's reform programs.

Teachers Support Independent Voices