

Labor/Community ALLIANCE

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VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2



FEBRUARY 1998

Labor and community groups say: Recall Mayor Patterson!

The Labor/Community Alliance invited several labor and community activists to write about the recall of Mayor Jim Patterson. We asked them to tell us why labor and Fresno's progressive community should be involved in this campaign. Here is what some of them had to say.

Why recall Mayor Patterson?

by Randy L. Ghan, Executive Secretary-Treasurer,
FMTK Central Labor Council

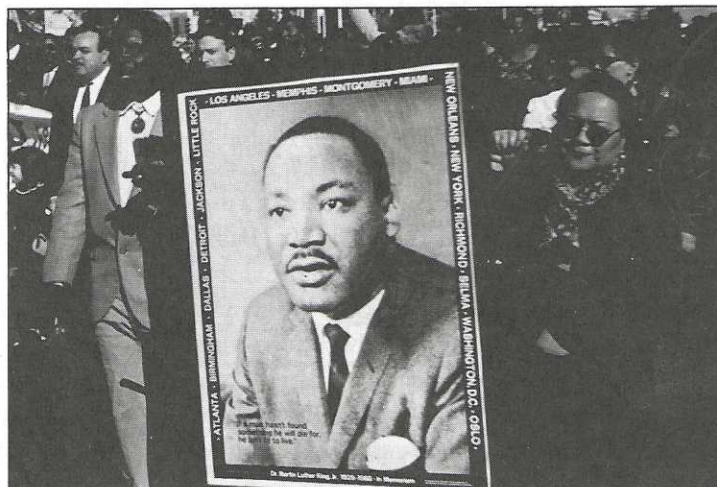
Fresno is the key hub of activity for the Central Valley. We need a mayor who can be a dynamic leader of all the social and economic forces that converge upon and influence this very important region. Organized labor should be a major part of these social and economic forces.

Since the beginning of his first campaign, Jim Patterson has talked about cooperation with local unions. Unfortunately, time and again he has failed to follow through. He has, on countless occasions, sought out and conferred with members of the labor community, only to leave them out of the final solution. His flip-flop style of inclusion-exclusion has been seen all too often. His personal style—consummate “good guy” in public and hateful, vindictive hatchet man when the cameras stop rolling—has not served to endear him to potential allies.

Jim Patterson has damaged his ability to work cooperatively with organized labor and much of his own conservative base. The alliance that has come together to bring about his recall demonstrates how very different organizations can work together when common interests are at stake. The money Mayor Patterson costs the city, both in salary and benefits and the money he has wasted, could have been used far better in positive changes. Many of his former allies

have joined us in calling attention to what the mayor has cost the city in terms of squandered finances, talent and cooperation. The citizens of Fresno deserve better! Now is the time to get involved, carry petitions and make this recall happen!

(Turn to page 4 for more articles on the recall effort.)



Great march, great day, great man

Participants in the Jan. 19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration march along Fresno Street toward the Saroyan Theater for an inspiring program honoring Dr. King and recognizing local activists. (additional photo, page 6)

Become a charter member of the Valley's first Jobs with Justice affiliate, to be called Labor/Community Alliance. Help us make this important project a reality. Attend our planning meeting:

Monday, Feb. 23, 5:30 P.M.

Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N. Van Ness

Jobs with Justice is a national coalition of labor unions and civil rights, women's, religious, student, farm and community organizations working together at the local level to defend and expand the rights of working people. Be a part of the action!

The purpose

*of Labor/Community Alliance
is to strengthen and unite the
labor movement and the progressive
community in the Central San Joaquin
Valley through information sharing.
This publication is printed monthly and
includes a calendar of events.*

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About our new masthead . . .

Our new masthead (see top of page 1) was designed by George Elfie Ballis. He took the photo portion while participating in the March 1966 UFW Delano-Sacramento march. Ballis had just resigned as editor of the *Valley Labor Citizen*, a now-defunct AFL-CIO weekly, a job he held for 13 years. In the mid-'50s, Ballis began political-union organizing work along with photography and film making. He gained an international reputation for his photo-film work with UFW, civil rights (SNCC in Mississippi), American Indians in Northern California, and Central City poor folks.

With his wife, Maia, Ballis now coordinates Sun Mountain, a 14-year-old environmental-spiritual 40-acre land trust near Tollhouse. Their current project, under an agreement with the Fresno County Building Department, is the design and construction of an experimental passive solar, straw bale-adobe dwelling. This project is partially funded by UFW, the Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club, rice growers and many small donations from individuals. Additional funding is being raised through Maia and Elfie's artistic work—graphic design, paintings, multi-media, videos, etc. They can be reached at (209)855-3710.

The Labor/Community Alliance welcomes your correspondence. Letters may be edited for reasons of space.

Klan rally report negative and simplistic

Larry Langford's mind was made up before he got to the Klan rally at the Fresno State campus and he saw exactly what he wanted to see, as evidenced by his negative report in your January 1998 issue. I was one of the "rowdy crowd" he refers to and I have a very different spin on what happened on Nov. 15.

First, he complains that the crowd "wasn't in the mood to listen." It may come as a surprise to Langford, but the crowd wasn't there to listen. They already knew what the Klan's message was, and they were there to oppose it. The jeers and obscenities he objects to arose from the anger and frustration that people felt; it may not have been the best response, but neither was a "peace rally" held miles away.

Second, the Neo-Nazis from Visalia deserved to be run off. Cowards usually will run when challenged. Their M.O. is to pick on the weak and vulnerable, such as the young woman they beat up later in Visalia. Ditto for Joe Hall. If the crowd hadn't run him off, there would be more "Joe Halls" at the next rally.

Third, the anti-Klan protesters who set up their banners in advance of the rally should be congratulated. An organized defense is essential in combating hate-groups such as the Klan. To Food Not Bombs and the ARA—thank you!

The last paragraph of Langford's report is packed with biases and misconceptions. Of course Johnson would say the rally was a success! Do you think he'd admit it if it was a failure? His last comment, that the Klan looked reasonable and tempered in comparison, is just the kind of comment they will pervert for their own use. It is Langford's biased report, not the crowd at Fresno State, that is exactly what the Klan ordered.

The "cause of freedom" cannot be won from afar or in isolation. Recent history shows that the best defense against Nazis, white supremacists, fascists and the like, is organization, education and confrontation. In the Pacific Northwest, in Vancouver, in the Bay Area, these cowards have been run off whenever confronted by disciplined, determined and dedicated people working in unison: a United Front.

Lastly, fair and accurate media coverage is critical in the fight against Neo-Nazism. The rally received neither, not from a mainstream daily like the *Fresno Bee*, nor from you. There were many positive aspects [of the rally] to highlight: the presence of many youth and people of color, the fact that three or four hundred showed up on such short notice. Perhaps not everyone had a complete understanding of why they needed to be there—the lack of overall cohesion was apparent—but they knew that the Klan's hate-filled message had to be countered. Their courage and enthusiasm should be nurtured and encouraged. A more thorough and balanced analysis, with constructive criticism where due, would have been invaluable. Instead, you echoed the *Bee*'s superficial reportage. Too bad.

Audrey Alorro, Merced, CA

Langford replies:

Believe me, if anyone ever needed constructive criticism, it would be the organizers of the anti-Klan rally at Fresno State. The most interesting aspect of Audrey Alorro's letter is her basic agreement with me. She correctly notes that the methods of the protesters "may not have been the best response" and that "the lack of overall cohesion was apparent" on the part of those denouncing the Klan. A protest that lacks cohesion is one that lacks effectiveness, and we cannot afford to be ineffective when confronting the Klan. Those who attended the peace rally in downtown Fresno understand this point. The ability to shout another down in public is the cheapest form of victory.

Exciting changes!

Labor/Community Alliance takes on new activist identity

by Larry Langford & John Veen

Members of the Frank Little Chapter of the Labor Party in Fresno recently voted to separate the *Labor/Community Alliance* newsletter from the party, and to initiate the formation of a new local body. This new organization will retain the now-familiar name Labor/Community Alliance, and will affiliate with Jobs with Justice, a well-known national coalition of activist labor and community groups. The vote to reorganize in this way was primarily the result of feelings by local members that the national Labor Party did not give sufficient emphasis to local issues or to forming broad-based coalitions between labor and community groups.



In particular, members of the Frank Little Chapter felt that the bylaws of the national party which prohibited involvement in electoral politics were too constraining, given the highly active nature of progressive politics in Fresno. In a letter being sent to local community groups, they state that "there must be some mechanism for local groups who

struggle on behalf of the rights of workers, minorities, women, and immigrants, as well as those who devote themselves to environmental, peace, and civil rights issues, to work together with a greater sense of common purpose." Their hope is that the Labor/Community Alliance, as an affiliate of Jobs with Justice, will help achieve this goal.

Jobs with Justice (JwJ) is a national coalition of labor unions, religious organizations, and civil rights groups that advocates direct action in local communities to defend the rights of working people. For example, Jobs with Justice was involved in the successful fight to restore back wages to workers at the *Denver Post*. In 1991, it organized the Health Care Action Week, which mobilized thousands of people across the nation on behalf of a national health care plan. It assisted public workers in Miami in defeating a plan to privatize public services, a move that would have destroyed their jobs, and it helped food service workers at Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, Texas, win their first union contract. Most recently, JwJ organized a national day of action in support of welfare/workfare workers and their right to organize.

Although its membership has been relatively small, the Frank Little Chapter of the Labor Party has been a highly visible group in Fresno. The publication of this very newsletter is primarily the result of its members' efforts, as have been the staging of such community events as the "Corporate Power" workshop at Fresno City College and the "Global Fresno" public forum at the Center for Nonviolence. With

labor issues becoming increasingly prominent in local and state politics, however, it was felt that a change of affiliation to Jobs with Justice would be a more effective way to support local progressive groups and to advance the interests of workers.

All who are interested in taking part in this effort are invited to attend an organizational meeting on **Monday, Feb. 23, 5:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence.**

As of Dec. 29, 1997, the Frank Little Chapter of the Labor Party is officially and formally separated from the *Labor/Community Alliance* newsletter. The Labor Party chapter still exists, but is in the process of being reorganized. To help with this process, to inquire about chapter executive board positions, or for information about the national Labor Party, please call John Veen, Chair, Frank Little Chapter/Labor Party, at 226-2078. If you get the answering machine (which says "You have reached 226-2078"), state what information you would like and leave your name, complete address and phone number. Speak slowly, please! We very much want to hear from you, and we will return your call or send information promptly.

Substitute teachers organize

The Fresno Area Substitute Teachers Association, FASTA, was established Oct. 19, 1997, to represent and promote the interests of Fresno Unified School District substitute teachers as well as to represent these employees in their relations with the Fresno Unified School District. Under the Rodda Bill (1975), employees may organize to form an exclusive bargaining unit that represents the interests of its group and is authorized to negotiate a contract with the district that pertains to issues of wages and hours, as well as to terms and conditions of employment.



In order for FASTA to achieve status as the exclusive bargaining unit for Fresno substitute teachers, it must request recognition by obtaining, through petition, 50 percent plus one of signatures from the list of active FUSD substitute teachers. At this time, many FUSD substitutes are circulating petitions to acquire the necessary number of signatures. These signatures are forwarded exclusively to the Public Employee Relations Board, an entity authorized to supervise the election process where it concerns enforcement of Rodda Bill provisions.

Fresno substitute teachers are entitled to a fair daily wage, a restored ratio that applies to all FUSD employees, paid sick leave and health benefits. Contact FASTA: 2037 W. Bullard #202, Fresno, CA 93711; 435-5715.

Recall the result of divided Republicans

by Larry Langford, Labor/Community Alliance

For years, the Republican party seemed monolithic when compared to the divided and often divisive coalitions that tried to find a home in the Democratic party. Lower taxes and smaller government was the mantra that almost all Republicans repeated, and its effectiveness as a political rallying cry was demonstrated in 1992 when Republicans became the majority party in Congress for the first time in more than 40 years. However, the old adage that the only thing worse than not getting what you want is getting it has been proven true, as the unity Republicans enjoyed while campaigning for office has dissolved under the pressures of having to govern.

While on the national level the Republican party struggles with itself over such issues as campaign finance reform and abortion rights, local Republicans have pulled out the political knives over what to do with Fresno's downtown area. Battles over the stadium, the convention center, and the Fulton Mall have divided Mayor Jim Patterson from some of his most prominent financial and political supporters, so that we have the unusual situation in this city of the business community seeking to throw a Republican administration out of office, and seeking to do it, moreover, with the help of labor unions and minority groups.

Unions and minorities might have a number of reasons for opposing Mayor Patterson, but for the business community it comes down to one reason: money. Specifically, where investment dollars will be spent in this city and who will reap the resulting financial benefits. If Mayor Patterson has his way, investors will direct more of their money to the outlying areas of the city, especially those located north of Herndon, which would be a windfall to real estate interests with major holdings there. The redevelopment of the downtown area would put profits into the pockets of a different set of investors. The mayor's opposition to the baseball stadium and to the Roeding Park business complex convinced many business leaders that he had no interest in seeing downtown Fresno revitalized, and therein lies the origin of the recall movement.

Which investors will profit, however, is not the only issue. Many Republicans are distressed by what they see as the mayor's sometimes erratic public behavior, with unprovoked outbursts of temper and a seeming inability to tolerate any kind of criticism. Disputes over fiscal policy can be divisive enough, but when compounded with personal animosity, even the strongest political coalitions can disintegrate, which is currently the case with Republican city politics. The interesting thing to watch over the next few months will be what advantage, if any, this situation presents to local

progressive parties. At the moment, the opportunity exists for a broad-based community effort to revitalize the downtown area, which means we could be treated to the rare sight of Republicans and progressives cooperating with each other to achieve a common goal.



Patterson: Up with the North, down with the South!

by Ben Benavidez

These aren't the best of times in Fresno, but our mayor doesn't get it. He's a man on a mission: *his* mission. Jim Patterson is an outsider to the beautiful city of Fresno. Coming from Palo Alto, "diversity" is a word he is unfamiliar with. I'm sure he is familiar with a handful of communities, but they all seem to have something in common: they are all wealthy. He has never before had to deal with the diversity of economic and cultural groups that Fresno has to offer.

Patterson is being recalled by his past and staunchest supporters due to his lack of economic and employment development for the entire community. He is rarely seen with representatives of the Latino, African-American, Southeast Asian or other minority communities. Patterson also has few words for the great unions that built the infrastructure of our city with no complaints. We would think that serving on the Human Relations Commission on three different occasions would have taught him something about the beauty of diversity. I guess it was just a career move rather than a sincere attempt to understand all our community has to offer.

He has practically abandoned the Westside C Street project, as if it were an elderly relative that he felt had become a liability. If the project is built, seniors would have a place to go shopping in their neighborhood instead of having to go across town for necessities such as food and medication. Patterson has made it clear that he is only able to see the problems of North Fresno. His idea of downtown revitalization is more

(cont. on page 6)

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Fresno peace and labor groups protest Chiapas massacre

by Larry Langford, Labor/Community Alliance

In conjunction with a series of rallies held across the United States to protest the massacre of 45 people in Chiapas, Mexico, peace and labor groups in Fresno joined in a demonstration at the Mexican consulate on January 2. About 75 activists



from groups such as El Comité NO NOS VAMOS, El Frente Indígena Oaxaqueño Bi-Nacional, the Labor/Community Alliance, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, and various local unions demonstrated in the cold and rain to demand that the Mexican government launch a thorough and vigorous investigation of the massacre and, especially, of the possible involvement of political and military leaders in the Chiapas area in arming and otherwise assisting those who carried out this atrocity.

In addition to signs that read "No Están Solos" ("They are not alone") and "Stop PRI-meditated murder," a reference to the governing party in Mexico, demonstrators carried cardboard cut-outs in the shape of doves, each bearing the name of one of the victims of the massacre. At the beginning and end of the rally, the names of the victims were read aloud, with the crowd answering "¡Presente!" after each name. In addition, a large poster was put on the outside wall of the consulate, with the permission of consular officials, that bore the message, "To the Mexican Government: Son 45 Mas. ¡Ya Basta!" ("There are 45 more. That's Enough!"). Everyone was urged to sign the poster, which would then be presented to the consul.

In contrast to a demonstration the previous day in front of Fresno City Hall, during which an American flag was burned, the demonstrators at the consulate were careful to show their respect for the United States and its flag. Nonetheless, several speakers, including Rufio Dominguez of El Frente Indígena, voiced their opposition to the North

American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which they said has contributed to the growing unrest in Mexico by attempting to deprive peasants of their land. They also voiced their concerns about the large amounts of arms and other military equipment that the American government is selling to Mexico. Such arms, they said, become readily available to paramilitary groups and death squads, such as those that carried out the massacre in Chiapas.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to aid the indigenous peoples of Mexico can send it to either of these addresses:

Banamex 1865651

Sucursal 349 de Jardines del Pedregal
Mexico, D.F.

Maestra Banco Internacional Bital
Sucursal de San Cristobal 367 de S.C.

#31-1101057-6

Checks or money orders should be made out to "Fideicomiso Para La Salud De Los Niños Indígenas De Mexico."



In memoriam

Mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers butchered in Chiapas in December:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ✦ Alonso Vázquez Gómez | ✦ Lorenzo Gómez Pérez |
| ✦ María Luna Méndez | ✦ Veronica Perez Oyalté |
| ✦ Rosa Vázquez Luna | ✦ Sebastian Gómez Pérez |
| ✦ Verónica Vázquez Luna | ✦ Daniel Gómez Pérez |
| ✦ Micaela Vázquez Luna | ✦ Pablina Hernández Vázquez |
| ✦ Juana Vázquez Luna | ✦ Roselia Gómez Hernández |
| ✦ Juana Luna Vázquez | ✦ Graciela Gómez Hernández |
| ✦ María Jiménez Luna | ✦ Guadalupe Gómez Hernández |
| ✦ Susana Jiménez Luna | ✦ María Ruiz Oyalté |
| ✦ Miguel Jiménez Pérez | ✦ Catalina Vázquez Pérez |
| ✦ Marcela Luna Ruiz | ✦ Catalina Luna Ruiz |
| ✦ Alejandro Luna Ruiz | ✦ Manuela Paciencia Moreno |
| ✦ Jaime Luna Ruiz | ✦ Margarito Gómez Paciencia |
| ✦ Regina Luna Pérez | ✦ Rose Gómez Pérez |
| ✦ Roselia Luna Pérez | ✦ Doida Ruiz Gómez |
| ✦ Ignacio Pukuj Luna | ✦ Agustín Ruiz Gómez |
| ✦ Micaela Pukuj Luna | ✦ Rose Perez Pérez |
| ✦ Victorio Vázquez Gómez | ✦ Manuel Vázquez Pérez |
| ✦ Agustín Gómez Ruiz | ✦ Juana Vázquez Pérez |
| ✦ Juana Perez Pérez | ✦ Josefa Vázquez Pérez |
| ✦ Juan Carlos Luna Pérez | ✦ Marcela Capote Vázquez |
| ✦ Marcela Vázquez Vázquez | ✦ Marcela Capote Ruiz |
| ✦ Antonia Vázquez Vázquez | |

Benavidez, cont. from page 4

card rooms and liquor stores. Putting more police on the streets is a good idea, but I think we would be better served if we gave our children parks to go to instead of jails to go in. Our schools' student bodies are made up of beautifully diverse children—our children. We need to provide them with a revitalized city, not a north side haven and a west side pit. We need youth centers and more parks that are green and clean in all areas of our community. Our city needs a balance between crime prevention and intervention programs.

This is the time to come together. We need to form a united front to ensure our victory over Patterson for the future of this great and diverse city. It's time to replace a mayor who is constantly cutting ribbons on new developments on the north side of town and cutting down the hopes of people elsewhere in the community. We need a leader who will bring the community together, not push it further apart. We will have change because enough people will have said "Enough is enough!" Progress is the result of everyday people standing against the status quo. Patterson no! Recall yes! Call 442-0380 to help.



Marchers head down M Street during the march honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Jan. 19. Hundreds turned out to celebrate King's life and rededicate themselves to the struggle for justice.

Judge agrees with union on campaign contributions

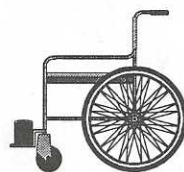
by Jerry Fillingim, SEIU 535

On Jan. 6, a U.S. District Court judge threw out Prop. 208, which limited union contributions to candidates to as much as two wealthy contributors could make. This is good news for small contributors who have to pool their money to have any political impact. All provisions of Prop. 208 are unconstitutional and unenforceable until the California Supreme Court looks at the issue of severability to see if any of the provisions are constitutional on their own. This means unions can raise, contribute and spend campaign funds under the pre-Prop. 208 rules. This ruling will have no impact on federal elections and city council and board of supervisor races that have their own campaign finance rules.

Wheelchair project rolls on

In April of this year, local schoolteachers Junko Kunitake and Patrick Young will be headed south to Chiapas, Mexico, and El Salvador. This is their tenth trip to Central America, and their fifth journey using buses to transport medical supplies and relief items to people suffering repression in Latin America.

This will be the first time they will be trying to organize a convoy of vehicles. If anyone has a healthy truck or van and wants to join the caravan (and has some free time), they should consider this. It is definitely an educational experience to see the situation in Mexico today.



Patrick recently completed a delivery to three towns in Chiapas, including Polho and Oventic, villages that have become refugee centers for indigenous people fleeing PRI-backed paramilitary death squads. Working with a group of volunteers from Pastors for Peace, they delivered an emergency donation of 3,000 lbs. of food, along with medicines, and a large dose of moral support. The people of the villages were very happy and relieved to see international support and solidarity for their cause.

This year's Wheelchair Project is soliciting donations of medicines, medical supplies, school or office supplies, used computers, tools, and money for expenses. For more information, please call 251-3814, or write to:

Wheelchair Project, 5205 E. Washington Ave. Fresno, CA 93727
E-mail: WheelchairBusProject@juno.com

Got e-mail?



Join the Labor/Community Alliance e-mail alert network. Receive information about local events and activities in the labor and progressive community. To join, send your e-mail address to: clr2@igc.apc.org and say you want to subscribe to the Labor/Community Alliance e-mail alert network.

Job Opportunity

The Democratic Party is running a Voter Registration Drive out of the Machinist's Union Hall. If you are interested in earning money for registering voters, call Minnie Santillan at 264-2815.

Charles A. Wieland

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Labor News



Solidarity with the teamsters. In a show of solidarity, Service Employee International Union Local 535 representatives Ed Castanon, Dave Gonzales, Roberta Ritchie and Lydia Marquez present a check to striking Teamsters Local 431 General Secretary-Treasurer Jim Bishop. The Teamsters local had been on strike at four ReadyMix Companies in Fresno. The donation went into the Teamsters strike fund.

Anti-labor initiative certified for June primary

by Jerry Fillingim, SEIU 535

The AFL-CIO lawsuit to throw out deceptively gathered signatures for the anti-labor initiative failed. The judge ruled that the governor was "in substantial compliance," and now the Secretary of State has certified that enough signatures were gathered for the issue to appear on the June primary ballot. The initiative is part of a national strategy by wealthy business interests to silence the voice of working people. In addition to the California initiative, similar measures are proceeding in eight other states. Congress is considering federal legislation (Paycheck Protection Act, H.R. 2608) that would do the same thing.

The purpose of these initiatives is to make it administratively difficult for unions to raise political money by denying payroll deduction of union dues if any of the money goes to political work. Instead, union members who voluntarily contribute to COPE would have to annually reauthorize COPE deductions on a specially designed state form. **If we don't have political money, we don't have legislation that is friendly to working people. The rich continue to get richer.**

The fight-back campaign is being coordinated through the central labor councils. Right now a great deal of research is going into understanding how union members and the electorate respond to this attack. On the basis of these findings, specific messages will be developed to use in our campaign. One of the challenges will be to devise messages that

relate to the everyday life of various kinds of workers. Workers overall should be concerned about the loss of the 8-hour day, or lack of health care for low-wage workers, but because of contract protections workers may be more interested in adequate funding for child welfare because of excessive workloads or safety retirement. These things all require political muscle to achieve.

Most people are not moved by the consequences of legislative action unless it affects them directly. Based on our past experience, it is clear that we will need to talk to each union member in California with direct mailings, phone banks and face-to-face contact by precinct walking. This is an enormous task, but we will also have to convince non-union voters of the insidious nature of this attack on the very fabric of a democratic society. Who else will speak for working people? This part of the campaign could easily cost \$8 to \$10 million for media alone. Prepare for an electoral firestorm. If you would like to help on this campaign, call Jerry Fillingim, SEIU Local 535, at (800)535-8777.

Daily OT fight. Repeal of California's "daily overtime" law, effective Jan. 1, means more than half of the state's workforce, 8 million workers, lose out. Workers whose union contracts specify daily overtime are not affected. The California Labor Federation has set up a toll-free number (1-888-NOPAYCUT) to field complaints and questions from workers. Gov. Pete Wilson (R.) vetoed legislation to restore daily overtime, and supporters of the measure vowed to pass it again in this assembly session. A poll by the Los Angeles-based Employers Group found 73 percent of businesses said they would stop paying daily overtime.

Coming soon . . . Labor and Community News Radio program on KCF. 88.1. Starting Friday, Feb. 27, 5-6 P.M. Stand by to find out what is happening in labor in Fresno, what community activists are doing, and to hear about issues that are impacting workers in the Valley.

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- ☐ 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 _____

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Calendar of Events



February 1998

Tuesday, February 3

Martin Luther King Jr. Student Art Exhibit Reception & Program, 4-6 P.M., Fresno Metropolitan Museum. Exhibit continues through Feb. 28.

Tuesday, February 10

Monthly Potluck & Discussion, 6:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Meets every second Tuesday to discuss what it means to have a personal commitment to nonviolence. Potluck at 6:30; program at 7:30. The video "School of the Assassins" will be shown. Call 237-3225.

Saturday, February 14

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

Sunday, February 15

World Meditation Day, 10 A.M., Meditation/dialogue on contentment, Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Call 435-2212.

Monday, February 16

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

Tuesday, February 17

Citizens Committee on Police-Community Relations, 7 P.M., Romero Peace and Justice Center, corner of Mariposa and R Streets.

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

Thursday, February 19

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

Saturday, February 21

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 10 A.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Call 229-9661.

HIV Substance Abuse Support Group, 2-4 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Call 485-3667.

Monday, February 23

Labor/Community Alliance, Jobs with Justice Planning Meeting (see page 1), 5:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Everyone welcome. Call 226-2078.

Wednesday, February 25

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

Saturday, February 28

Volunteer Workshop, 10 A.M.-4 P.M., Machinist's Hall. Recruiting and mobilizing volunteers for a larger local activist base. Call Fred Fuchs at 298-1171 or 872-1917 to reserve a space.

February is African-American History Month. Ongoing Activities/Events

Chiapas Support Committee. Call Stan or Gloria for meeting dates: 441-7131.

Scalzo Talk, Mon & Thurs 6-9 P.M., KAAT 103.1-FM.

Weekly

Monday-Friday: The Living Room, support and referral resource center for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Noon to 5 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N. Van Ness. Call 485-3667.

Every Saturday: Food Not Bombs feeds the hungry; 1-2 P.M. near the Olive Avenue entrance to Roeding Park. **Needed: volunteers to help cook food Saturday mornings**, 9:30, Sierra Vista United Methodist Church, corner of Maple & Illinois.

Support the Equal Education Opportunities Initiative

"In order to provide equal opportunity, promote diversity, and combat discrimination in public education, the state may consider the economic background, sex, ethnicity, and national origin of qualified individuals." Call Aimee Durfee, Students for Educational Opportunities, at 510-848-6497.

This Month in History

Feb. 2, 1807: Foreign slave trade outlawed in the U.S.

Feb. 4, 1914: Birth of Rosa Parks, civil rights pioneer

Feb. 6, 1919: Seattle General Strike. Entire city stands in solidarity behind 32,000 longshoremen on strike, shutting the city down.

Feb. 8, 1978: Native Americans begin the Longest Walk from San Francisco to Washington, D.C.

Feb. 12, 1909: Founding of the NAACP

Feb. 15, 1820: Birth of Susan B. Anthony

Feb. 19, 1942: FDR sends 120,000 West Coast Japanese, including U.S. citizens, to concentration camps.

Feb. 21, 1956: Martin Luther King Jr. indicted on conspiracy charges in Montgomery bus boycott

Feb. 24, 1965: District 1199 (Health Care Workers) becomes the first U.S. union to oppose the Viet Nam War.

Feb. 28, 1958: Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament begins in London; origin of peace symbol.

Support Bilingual Education

Call Central Valley Collaborative on Bilingual Education, 1-800-821-8077.

Scholarship project helps impoverished Nicaraguan students

by Mike Rhodes

The children in the rural Nicaraguan community of Telpaneca are able to go to school today because of the assistance of many generous donors from Fresno. Without this help, many families could not afford to send their children to school. Instead of spending their days in the classroom, these children would be working on the family farm or trying to sell things to earn money to help buy food for their families.

The Fresno/Telpaneca Sister City Association (F/TSCA) started a scholarship project in 1993. Hundreds of students have been helped and several are now going to college. In the first couple years of the scholarship project, individual donors were matched with a student. The two could write each other and pictures were often exchanged. For \$75 a person could fully sponsor a student for one year. While that much money is not a lot here, it is an enormous amount of money in Telpaneca. As there is virtually no overhead, just about all the money went directly to assist the student.

Students have received a backpack, uniform, books, notebooks, pencils and paper. In addition, the students' entire tuition is paid. For many, the scholarship was the difference between attending school or not. In Nicaragua the official unemployment rate is about 60 percent, and it's probably worse in Telpaneca. Nicaragua is now the second most impoverished nation in the hemisphere (Haiti is No. 1).

In 1997 the F/TSCA gave \$3,900 to Telpaneca for the scholarship project. The money was given to the parents' associations in four school districts. It was left up to them to

determine how to best use the money. At that time, the Fresno group decided that 1997 would be the last year for the scholarship project. Arturo Hines, who is from Fresno, had been living in Nicaragua and was able to coordinate the logistics. When he left (he is now living in Tunisia), it was felt that it would no longer be possible to continue.

The F/TSCA was pleasantly surprised to receive full reports from three of the four school districts. The school in the city of Telpaneca sent pictures (example below) of the students proudly holding their new notebooks. From Santo Domingo, a small coffee growing co-op, we were given a copy of each student's grades. They are all doing very well. The students from Santo Domingo must get up at 5:30 A.M. to begin a 10-mile hike to school each day. These kids are serious about their education!

The report from El Pericon stated that all students had passed to the next grade. A delegation from the F/TSCA went to El Pericon in 1989, and together with students and parents built the school in that community.

The F/TSCA has decided to continue the scholarship project in 1998. Donations can be sent to:

Fresno/Telpaneca Sister City Association
P.O. Box 4496 Fresno Ca 93744.

This year the money will be given to the three school districts that sent reports on how the money was used. For more information about the association, please visit the web site at www.compugraph.com/sci/ca/fresno/telpaneca/index.html, or call 226-0477.



Third graders at the Oscar Maradiaga School in Telpaneca, Nicaragua, pictured with their new notebooks on Oct. 3, 1997.