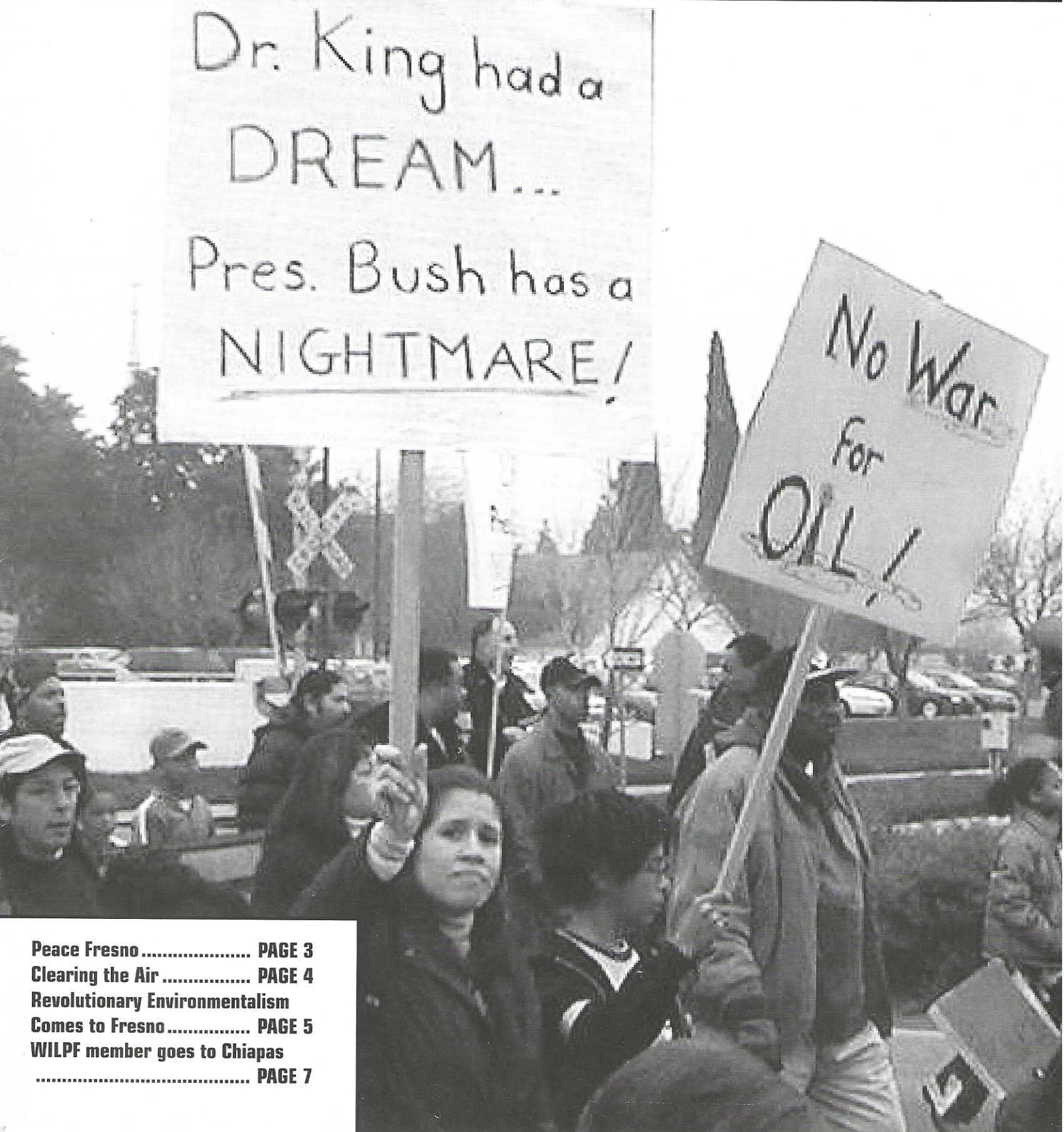


COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

FEBRUARY 2003



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The *Community Alliance* is an independent voice for workers and progressive groups in the Central San Joaquin Valley. The goal of this monthly magazine is to build a powerful progressive movement that will support social, environmental, & economic justice, immigrant rights, and a living wage for all working people. We seek to expose social and political injustices, and to link the diverse network of activists working in our community.

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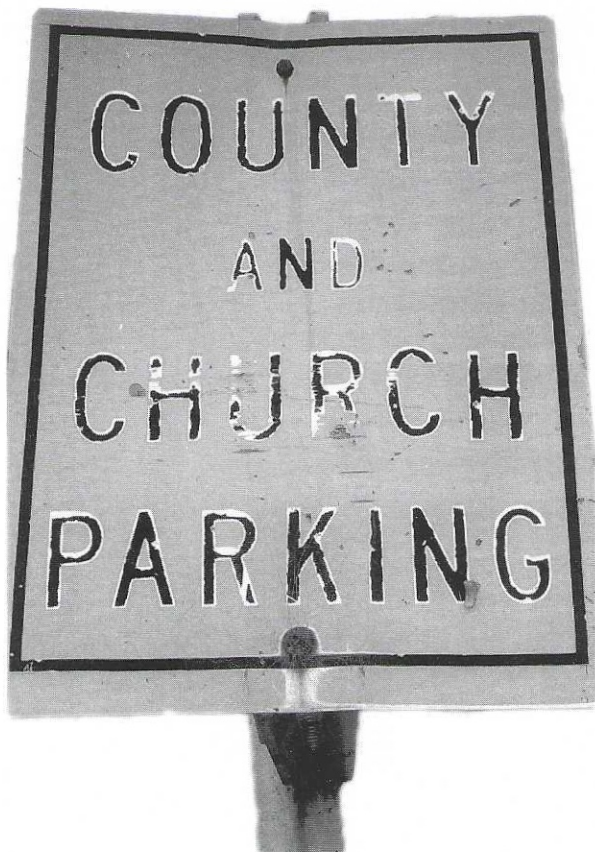
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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Democratic Party is on the move in Fresno County. Fresno is home to one of only nine permanent offices in the state. The Fresno office is located at 255 N. Fulton (Tower District) in Suite #104 and is open from 11 AM to 3 PM.

Four new clubs have been formed during 2002, led by Democratic activist Barbara Pyle, including Stonewall Democrats (Jay Hubbell, president), Southeast Democratic Club (Hope Diaz, president), Clovis Democratic Club (Susan Gonzales, president), and West Fresno Democratic Club (Bill Riddlesprigger, president). These join the Kennedy Club (Richard Martinez, president) and the Fresno County Democratic Women's Club (Donna Youngman, president).

Additionally, clubs are being formed at CSUF and in Sanger and Reedley. The goal for 2003 is to have a club in each of the 15 communities in Fresno County. A president's summit is planned for March 1, 2003, hosted by the Kennedy Club, and Fresno will be hosting the California Democratic Council 50th State Convention in April.

During the 2002 election, a Strategy 100% campaign was launched by the Fresno County Democratic Central Committee (Sam Pack, president), spearheaded by member-activist Herb Fisher to register Democratic voters to vote permanent absentee. Only Democrats were contacted by 50 volunteers making calls. The thousands who registered appreciated knowing they could register to vote permanent absentee. Registration was also conducted at the October Democratic fair booth, at shopping centers, and monthly at the U.S. citizen swearing-in ceremonies at the Convention Center.

The 5th Annual Stars Come Out event was held at CSUF December 7, 2002, by the Fresno County Democratic Central Committee. "Stars" were awarded to Democrats Harriet Ingram, Barbara Pyle, Ronnie McNair, Donna Youngman, Herb Fisher, and Peggy Pack. Newly elected Senator Dean Florez was the recipient of the Democrat of the Year Award and was keynote speaker. Funds generated will support future election efforts in the Central Valley.

The Fresno County Democratic Women's Club holds an annual July 4 picnic at CSUF, and each year there is a Jefferson-Jackson dinner in support of the Democratic Fresno office.

Ray Ensher

What is this picture saying?

Vickie M. Fouts

While on vacation recently in Bisbee, Arizona, I ran across this street sign at a parking lot next to a church and across the street from the county government building. It made me ask what has happened to the separation of church and state? It also reminded me of Bush's proposal for "faith-based" government social programs. Looks like Bisbee is ahead of everyone else in the country. Bush should be proud.

What to Do if War Breaks Out

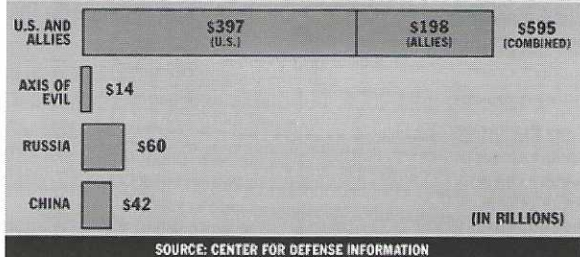
by Courtney Ramirez

Peace Fresno's sincere hope is that the growing peace movement around the nation will prevent the United States government from taking action against Iraq. However, in the event that an attack on Iraq does occur, we invite everyone in the community to join us in our organized response.

Day One: On the day of the attack, please join us at Shaw and Blackstone for a protest and vigil. Just show up anytime during the day: after work, on your lunch break—you might even call in sick! We encourage everyone to bring candles, signs, and pictures.

Day Two: On the first business day following the Shaw and Blackstone protest, there will be a protest at the Federal Building in downtown Fresno. It is located at the corner of Fresno and O Streets, by the historic water tower. The protest will last from 8 AM to 6 PM and there will be speakers from 12 noon to 1 PM. Please gather at 11:45 AM for the speakers.

GLOBAL MILITARY SPENDING



website <www.fresnoalliance.com/peacefresno>.

We encourage you to come to as many of the events as possible. Join us in a united statement against the attacks, if and when they do occur. Hopefully, the voices raised now will be heard and these plans will be unnecessary.

Peace Fresno Monthly Events

Every Tuesday • 7:00 P.M.

Peace Fresno meets at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at 985 N. Van Ness. If you want to help stop Bush's endless war against the world - come to this meeting! For an up to the minute listing of all Peace actions in the Fresno area, call the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at 559-23PEACE (559-237-3223). For more information about Peace Fresno, visit their web site at: <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/peacefresno>.

Every Thursday • 5:00-6:00 P.M.

Campus Peace and Civil Liberties Coalition at CSUF meets in Student Union Room 308. Keep informed about educational campus and community events. For more information contact Ayami

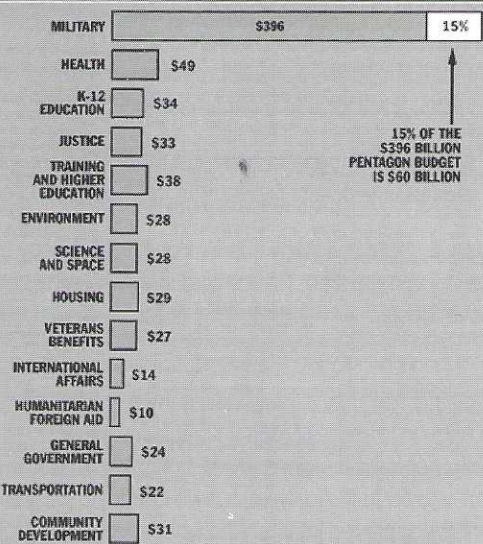
Day Three: The Saturday following the attack, Peace Fresno is organizing a march starting at noon at Macaroni Grill on Blackstone in the River Park shopping center. The march will travel down Blackstone to Shaw Ave. We will arrive at the corner of Blackstone and Shaw at approximately 1:30 PM.

There will also be a community Peace Fresno meeting that will take place after these events. The details are to be announced.

For more details, please call the Center for Nonviolence at 237-3223 or visit Peace Fresno's

FEDERAL SPENDING (IN BILLIONS)

TOTAL DISCRETIONARY BUDGET PROPOSED FOR 2003: \$767B



(BILLIONS IN BUDGET AUTHORITY | SOURCE: BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES, FY 2003)

at amisukepon@yahoo.com or Morghan at youngmorghan@hotmail.com.

Every Friday • 4:30 P.M.

Weekly Vigils to Stop the War are held at Shaw and Blackstone every Friday.

Every Sunday • 12:30-2:00 P.M.

A demonstration for peace at Walnut and Mooney in Visalia. Bring signs for peace and smiles. For more information contact Denise at 636-0514.



Peace March

Saturday, Feb. 15 12:00 Noon

International Day of Protest Against U.S. War on Iraq

FRESNO Tower District: Olive & Wishon, across from the Tower Theater 12:00 - 1:00 PM: "Hour in the Tower" Rally 1:00 PM: March from the Tower to Fresno City College's west lawn, Van Ness & Weldon.

In Solidarity with demonstrations in San Francisco, Sacramento and world-wide!

For more information contact Camille Russell at Peace Fresno, 276-2592 www.fresnoalliance.com/peacefresno

Clearing the Air: A Burning Issue

by Kevin Hall

Well, the newly seated Fresno City Council got off to an interesting start last month. Right out of the gate at his first meeting, freshman council member Henry T. Perea initiated development of an ordinance to ban wood-burning fireplaces from all future homes.

At first glance, it seems like a no-brainer. Of course we need such a ban. The health impacts of smoke, through both acute and long-term exposure, are deadly. And it's certainly about time local politicians started to show some initiative on the most pressing human health issue of our time.

However, Perea is pushing the council to act too soon, and he is doing so at the request of the local Building Industry Association.

It's too soon because the SJV Air Pollution Control District is working on a Valley-wide rule. (Note: Last month I incorrectly described a December rule-making workshop as a board meeting. Sorry for the confusion.) A second round of workshops will be held in February, and the rule should reach the board in April. It will include a ban and much more.

But if Perea wants Fresno to have the most effective rule possible, he must wait to see the final district rule to spot the loopholes. They'll be there.

For instance, there are many subdivision tracts already under construction or approved for construction. Their environmental clearances have been granted. They have "vested" development rights the air district will be afraid to tamper with.

The air district rule may exempt new homes on lots of one acre or more. It will also do nothing to address existing fireplaces except call for no-burn days with weak enforcement provisions. It will exempt low-income households that rely solely on wood burning for heat, but will create no program to retrofit them with cleaner EPA-approved inserts. And what about those McMansions being built in northeast Fresno and Clovis with patio-adorned outdoor fireplaces?

The best course of action for politicians is join us in the trenches at the air district and fight for the toughest Valley-wide rule possible. Perea & Co. can't close the loopholes until they've been created, nor can they all be anticipated. But if he's taking guidance from those who write the loopholes, then something far more sinister and all too familiar is at work.

Perea's building industry backers have moved him, pawn-like, into furthering their agenda. In the process he trapped his fellow council members into supporting his ill-timed request. After all, a no vote would have created the appearance of disregard for human health.

The industry agenda, as I mentioned last month, includes promotion of "clean air subdivisions." The members of the local Building Industry Association are writing their own criteria. They will then bestow the designation upon their own projects. Unsuspecting homebuyers will be deceived into thinking they are buying in an area with clean air.

Unfortunately, and potentially tragically, those so-called clean air subdivisions would be found in the identified growth areas of Copper River, Fancher Creek, Rio Mesa, and Clovis. All of these areas fall into the dirtiest air pocket in the United States: the Fresno Eddy. Highways 41, 168, and 180 (under construction) have been driven like new pipes into an already deadly gas chamber.

Due to sprawl-induced traffic, the area's ozone and particulate pollution will continue to worsen.

Will Council Member Perea require his backers at the Building Industry Association to offer full disclosure of health risks to unsuspecting homebuyers? Yeah, right. More likely he'll be there to cut the ribbon and accept the campaign contributions.

The larger issue on the industry agenda is an even more important rule at the air district: indirect source mitigation fees. This rule would require new developments of all types to purchase emission reduction credits based on the amount of pollution they'll create through traffic.

This rule won't be considered until 2005, but guess which city council can qualify for a seat on the Valley Air Board in 2004?

You guessed it. Is this new Fresno city council member being groomed by the Building Industry Association for such a seat? Has he already been assimilated into the industry public relations push to pass weak rules that sound tough?

I watched Perea closely at the city council meeting and listened intently. When answering a question from a fellow city council member, he looked to a pair of men sitting in the audience for confirmation that he had it right. He got the nod. One of them was the BIA executive director. The other was a prominent representative for local developers, infamous for having given the greatest political scandal in recent history its name: Operation Rezone. The FBI took it from his personalized license plate.

Will our next political corruption scandal be called Operation Ozone? Only if we let it happen. I urge residents of Fresno to follow this ordinance closely and be ready to hold this politician accountable.

(Kevin Hall is the Sierra Club-Tehipite Chapter's chair for transportation, air quality, and global warming. To learn more about the air we breathe and the California Clean Air Campaign, please visit <www.calcleanair.org>.)

On TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25th
buy green and support
FRESNO EARTH DAY
2003!

Community Support Day
Whole Foods Market
in the
Fig Garden
Shopping Center



5% of the profits will go to
the Fresno Earth Day Commit-
tee To find out more:
[www.fresnoalliance.com/](http://www.fresnoalliance.com/earthday)
earthday
or call (559) 243-9338.

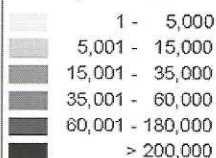
First Annual Drift Conference

California leads the U.S. in pesticide use, with more than 315 million pounds of pesticide active ingredients sold in 2000. More than 90% of pesticides used in the state are sprayed, dusted, or used as fumigants, which are carried away from the application site by wind and on airborne soil particles. Drifting pesticides travel for miles, resulting in widespread toxic air pollution in our homes, at our schools, and on our roads. Whether you live in urban or rural areas, pesticide drift can affect you. You can become better informed about this very serious problem in our valley by registering to attend the first annual Drift Conference.

Reported Agricultural Pesticide Use In Fresno County

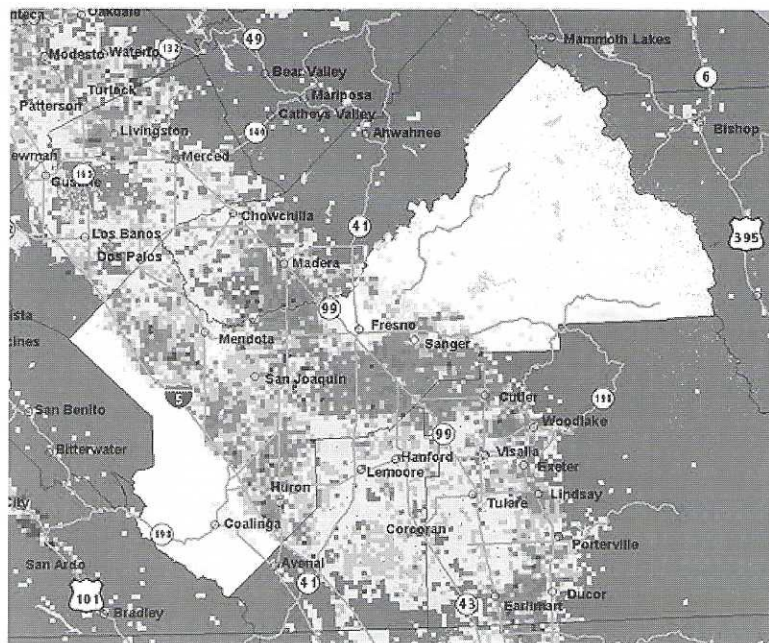
Total Pounds of Active Ingredient Applied Per Square Mile

Pesticide Use
lbs / square mile



Highways
Water
Fresno County
Cities

Data Sources:
Cal. EPA DPR Pesticide
Use Report 1999
Public Land Survey DPR 1999
Datamocracy Road, Water and
County Coverages
Produced with
ESRI ARCVIEW 3.2a software



Conference location:
**CSUF Political Science
Building**

Date: February 8, 2003

Time: 8:30 AM-5:30 PM

**Cost: \$10-\$20
sliding scale,
including lunch
(no one turned away for
lack of funds)**

**English-Spanish
interpretation available;
child care available**

Sponsored by the California State University-
Fresno Department of Political Science and Cali-
fornians for Pesticide Reform.

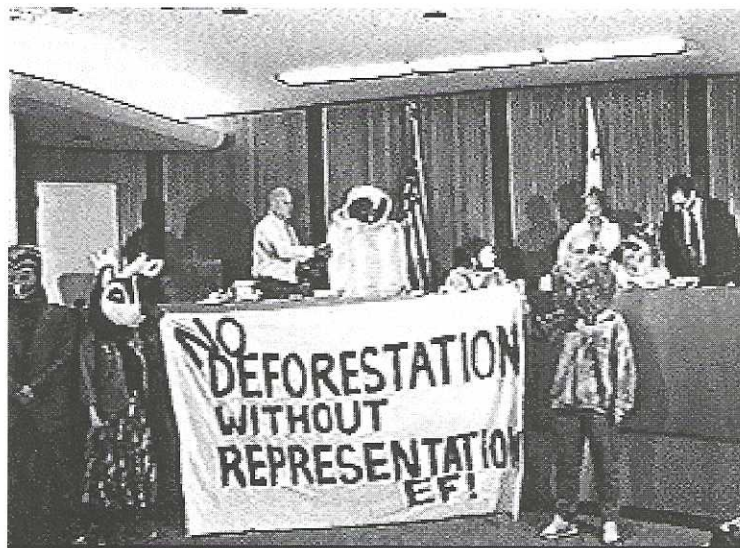
Register now! Contact Californians for Pesticide
Reform at (415) 981-3939 ext. 356 or (888) CPR-
4880. Registration forms are available online at
<www.pesticidereform.org>.

Revolutionary Environmentalism Comes to Fresno

by Michael Becker

There is going to be a historic gathering of folks from or speaking on behalf of revolutionary environmental groups in the U.S. at Fresno State (yes, that's what I said—Fresno State!) on Thursday and Friday, February 13 and 14. I have been helping to organize a conference entitled Revolutionary Environmentalism: A Dialogue Between Activists and Academics. Groups represented are Sea Shepherd, Earth First!, PETA, Animal Liberation Front, and Earth Liberation Front. There will be a panel presentation and discussion on Thursday night in the Satellite Student Union at 7 PM and round tables on Thursday and Friday during the day. The round tables are entitled The Ethics of Sabotage, Revolutionary Environmentalism: Is It a Spirituality?, and Biology and the Ethics of Scientific Research. For more information you can contact the University Lecture Series or the University Public Relations Office. If you don't feel you are getting solid information from them, feel free to contact me.

There will almost certainly be considerable attendance at the forums from folks on the right who are alternately afraid of and enraged by underground and direct-action environmental groups. In that light I doubly appreciate your help in getting the word out about this interesting and important dialogue.



It is pretty obvious that many political leaders have been bought out by the big businesses that loot the forests and the earth for their executive's short-term gains. Here Earth First protesters pose as the animals themselves, demanding that humans get out of their precious habitat. The location is a California state government meeting room.

Welcome to *Fresno Happenings*, where you get more entertaining options than you can shake a stick at. Mind you, *Happenings* constantly recreate themselves in this place we call home, so if you want more details than listed here, you may just have to pull a Matlock and do a little investigating. Having said that . . . let's get down to business. Here's the skinny for February. Enjoy . . .

Fresno Happenings

Every Monday @ The Starline: Unplugged Mondays, a Psychochick Production. Bring your words, your beats, hey you can even air guitar if you feel it . . . this open mic night is a free-for-all. \$1.00 cover gets you in. All ages welcome. 9 PM-?.

Every Tuesday @ Club Fred: Psychochick Productions rolls out another open mic at Fred's. The list is always full so get there early. \$1.00 cover. 21 and over please.

Every Wednesday @ Club Habanos: The Cigar Bar on Palm & Herndon is the place to be . . . why? Well, glad you asked . . . "The Dakota Iyall Trio" bring all the best in jazz and jazz funk. Come watch as the trio introduces the regulars to some quality music! No cover. 21 and over please. 9 PM-?.

Every Wednesday @ The Starline: Open mic jam with "Dos Delgados." I know you have some musical talent you're just itchin' to scratch . . . this would be the place for relieving that itch. Bring your musical skills to the Starline and do your thing. Jason and Thomas host this new edition to weekly happenings & charge a mere \$1.00 cover for those 21 and over. 8 PM-?.

Every Wednesday on 90.7 FM: The airwaves sparkle with the raw sounds of "Explorations," the weekly indulgence of Mykal Powell and his crate of jazz, funk, rare groove, and other gems. Check it out, 6 PM-8:15 PM.

Every Wednesday on 90.7 FM: *Ay caramba* it's time for "Jambalaya Corner" with your hostess Ms. Devoya Mayo. Join Devoya as she raps with local community artists and tries to weasel free stuff out of them at the same time. Catch the corner from 8:15 PM-9:00 PM.

Every Thursday @ Avalon: Reality Sounds brave the elements, bringing you all the latest in dance hall and riddims! No cover. 21 and over. 10 PM-?.

Every Friday @ The Landmark: Looking for a swanky lounge out vibe? Check out "The Kevin Hill Trio" as they make beautiful jazz together. No cover. 8 PM-11 PM.

Wednesday, Feb 5 @ The FSU Pub: The Poetry Jam at the pub is a must-see. Don't be shy; the poetry love will inspire you, no doubt. Get there early to insure a good spot. No cover. All ages. 7 PM-9 PM.

Thursday, Feb 13 @ Veni Vidi Vici: Beat Dynasty brings the hotness once again with rare groove, soul, trip-hop and other tasty vinyl treats. The ambience alone is reason enough to come out and enjoy the vibe. No cover. 10 PM-?.

Tuesday, Feb 18 @ The Starline: "Ahh Yeah Poetry Jam" breaks out yet another evening of spoken word, visual stimulation, and rhythm. Special guest DJ "Conan The Beat Barbarian" helps weave the words as hosts Feather Dwise & Shady Nate keep the crowd wanting more. \$2.00 cover. All ages. 8 PM-11 PM.

Thursday, Feb 20 @ Kern Street Coffee: "The Inner Ear Poetry Jam" heats things up in happening downtown Fresno. Hosts Bryan Medina & Mike Medrano get things moving with spoken word and a host of other surprises. No cover. All ages. 8 PM-10 PM.

You can plan a pretty picnic but you can't predict the weather. —Outkast

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno

Rev. Bryan D. Jessup

*Welcomes you, whoever you are
and whomever you call family, our doors are open.*



Sermon Topics:

Feb 3 Saving the Bible from Fundamentalism, the Rev. Bryan Jessup

Feb 9 Out in the Woods with Emerson, the Rev. Bryan Jessup

Feb 16 Multilateralism on Every Side, the Rev. Bryan Jessup

Feb 23 Presentation on the WSSD Conference in South Africa, Joan Poss, guest speaker

Sunday Services & Church School 9:15 and 11:00 am
4144 N. Millbrook Fresno, CA 93726
559.227.6164

POETRY CORNER

The following short poem escaped from my pen last month. If others submit short relevant poems, I'll select one each month for publication.

We think "I wouldn't do that"
meaning "I could never be like them."

We say "They can't be allowed to do that"
meaning they're not fit to live.

We do what's needed to make sure they'll
never do that again.

So doing, we are "them" to them.

by Richard Stone

REBELARTE

a project of Teatro de la
Tierra
PRESENTS

February 14, 2003 Music

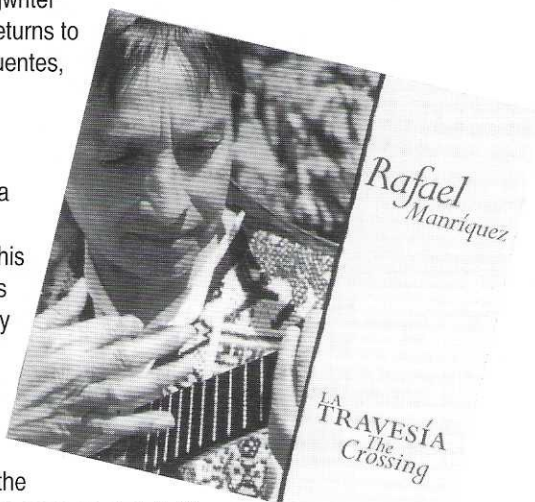
Chilean singer/songwriter Rafael Manriquez returns to Fresno with Lichi Fuentes, and Quique Cruz to perform in concert.

Singer/songwriter Agustín Lira, Patricia Wells, and Ravi Knypstra will open this concert that features new compositions by Lira and Manriquez.

There is a pre-concert chat with the composers half an hour before the concert.

7:30 PM Pre-concert chat; 8:00

PM Nuevo Canto Concert; \$8 advance, \$10 door, \$5 seniors & students, \$2 children 12 and under



February 28, 2003 Theater

Teatro Inmigrante debuts their new play *Cruz: Incident at Labor Camp 12* written and directed by Agustín Lira, at the Rogue Festival, a festival of theater, music, and poetry. The story is based on Lira's childhood memories of moving to the Central Valley at the age of seven, with his family, to a labor camp near Five Points, California. 10:00 PM, The Starline, 381 Fern Ave., Fresno; general seating \$5; Rogue Main Stage

March 1, 2003 Music

Singer/guitarist Merlinda Espinosa will sing Mexican and Latin American folklore, Nuevo Canto, rock, ballads . . . and so on; a student of Agustín Lira for the last four years, this young lady was born to sing. Rogue Music & Poetry Stage, 1:30 PM, Veni Vidi Vici patio, 1116 N. Fulton Ave, Fresno; \$3

March 1, 2003 Theater

Teatro Inmigrante performs *Cruz* at the Rogue Main Stage. 8:30 PM, The Starline, 381 Fern Ave., Fresno; general seating \$5

March 1, 2003 Music

Rondalla Nuevo Mundo, directed by Patricia Wells Solórzano, is an all-acoustic ensemble of voices and guitars that performs the folklore and Nuevo Canto songs of Latin America and the U.S., developed through Wells's residency. The group includes Eduwíes Jalomo, Maria Elena Garcia, Margaret Delgado, Miguel Mejia, and Santiago Gomez. Rogue Music & Poetry Stage, 2:30 PM, Veni Vidi Vici patio, 1116 N. Fulton Ave., Fresno; \$3

March 2, 2003 Theater

Teatro Inmigrante performs *Cruz* at the Rogue Main Stage. 7 PM, The Starline, 381 Fern Ave., Fresno; general seating \$5

March 8, 2003 Theater

Teatro Inmigrante performs *Cruz* at the Rogue Main Stage. 4 PM, The Starline, 381 Fern Ave., Fresno; general seating \$5

March 8, 2003 Music

Merlinda Espinosa performs at the Rogue Music & Poetry Stage. 6:30 PM, Veni Vidi Vici patio, 1116 N. Fulton Ave., Fresno; \$3

**For more information call:
(559) 237-3016**

Sponsored by Teatro de la Tierra, California Arts Council, Fresno Arts Council, Barrios Unidos, the Center for Nonviolence, and
Meet the Composers

FRESNO WILPF MEMBER GOES TO CHIAPAS

By Gabrielle Kirkland tellgabby@yahoo.com

Visiting the southern edge of Mexico in Chiapas was eye opening to an invisible world.

For ten days my senses toured the reality of people struggling for global liberty, justice and democracy. Majority of the indigenous people of Chiapas strap these goals to their daily lives as they unite for issues that affect every American, Canadian, German, Asian and more.

Returning to the states after being among a group of people pleading for basic human rights has left my mind a little foggy. The reality in Fresno is quite different from Chiapas, which has little to do with technology or supplies. The communities and organization striving for justice possess a pureness and connection to life, this is rare to feel here.

Feelings of gratefulness and humility were ever present when hearing an array of personal stories. The first four to five days were spent meeting with organizations that are working with and for the indigenous communities in Chiapas. This information was preparatory to visiting communities on the outskirts of San Cristobal de las Casas.

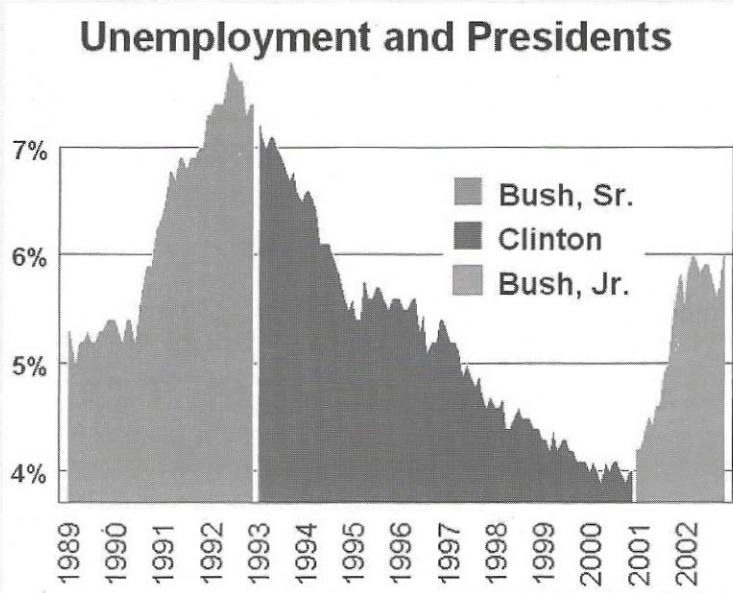
Community visits included Acteal, Oventic and San Andres, which are all significant to the Zapatista movement. These visits offered a glimpse of the daily focus maintained which is on liberty and justice for Mexico and the world. It was both beautiful and difficult to view this environment for the oppression they face yet it was beyond inspiring to see the motivation in the eyes of the people.

This trip was a part of a Global Exchange Reality Tour group that contained 13 people from the United States and Canada and varied in ages from 18 to 60 something. The group really brought an amazing insight to the trip because of the backgrounds each had. We stayed in a hotel in San Cristobal de las Casas.

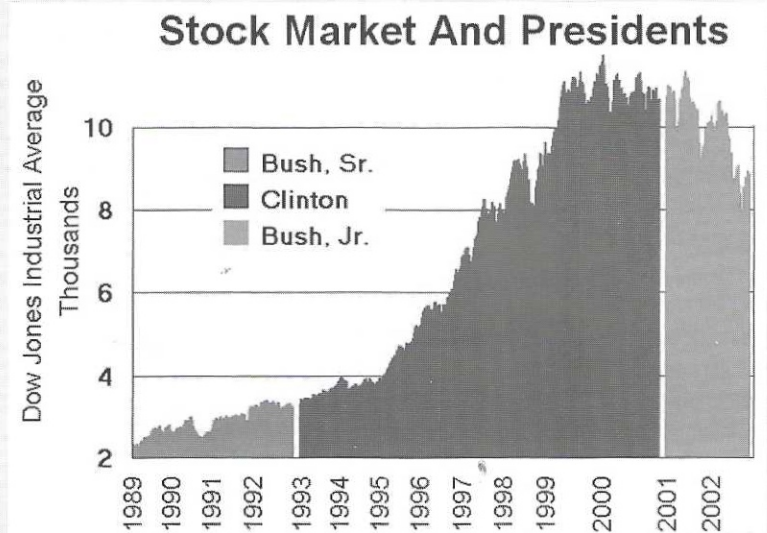
I am looking forward to sharing specific stories and details about an array of information gathered there. Some of the topics include: women's role and equality, education, traditional medicines, Plan Panama Project, human rights, genetically modified foods, peace building, health care and more.

If anyone has ideas or requests about sharing this information either written, oral or any other way I would be more than happy to do so. Much credit goes to Women's International League of Peace and Freedom (WILPF) who made this trip possible in financial support. I look forward to sharing the messages I collected in Chiapas.

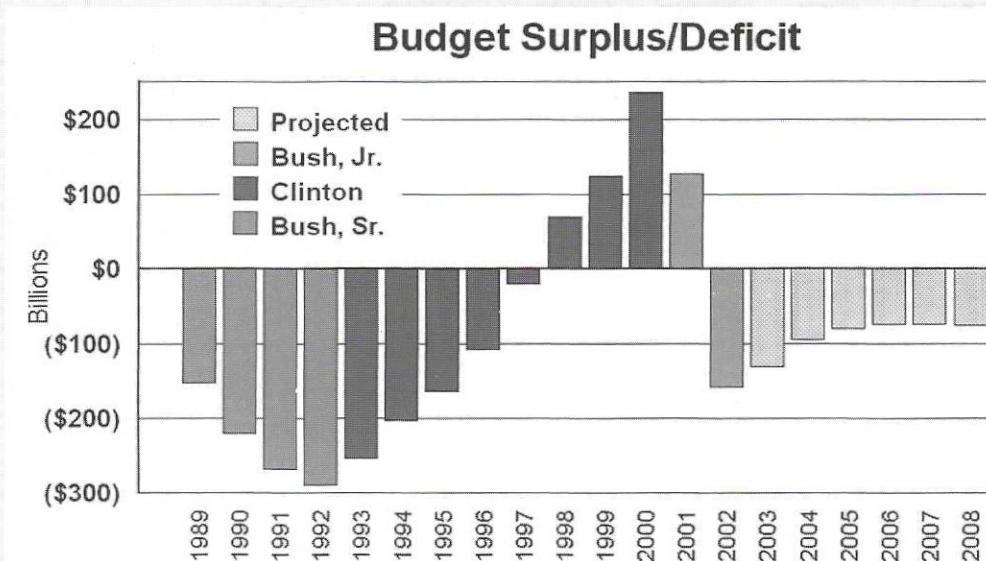
Are you better off than you were 2 years ago?



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.
Last updated January 10th, 2003.



Source: Dow Jones. Last Update: January 10th, 2003.



Sources: Office of Management and Budget. Projections from the Bush White House.
Last Update: January 16th, 2003.

For further reading see:

Of 18k American Economics Association Members, only 12 Identify themselves as Supply-siders.

Bush claimed that we would grow our way out of the deficit, just as supply-side theory suggests, "Tax relief is central to my plan to encourage economic growth, and we can proceed with tax relief without fear of budget deficits, even if the economy softens." - G. W. Bush, 03/27/01, but now no credible economist projects a surplus in the foreseeable future.

The Brookings Institute, studying the fiscal health of the government, finds that "...federal budgeting methods significantly misrepresent the government's underlying fiscal position".

This page courtesy Academy Computer Services, Inc., maintained by Scott Davis, MBA.



Home Health Care Workers in Fresno Struggle for a Living Wage

by Mike Rhodes

December 20, 2002

A candlelight vigil was held in Fresno to draw attention to the home-health-care workers' need for a living wage. Service Employees International Union local 250, which represents more than 10,000 Fresno County

home-health-care workers, is negotiating a first contract with the county. Workers are hoping the contract will include a \$10 an hour wage plus health care benefits. The county is claiming that because the State of California is having budget problems in Sacramento, they are unable to increase workers' salary and benefits.

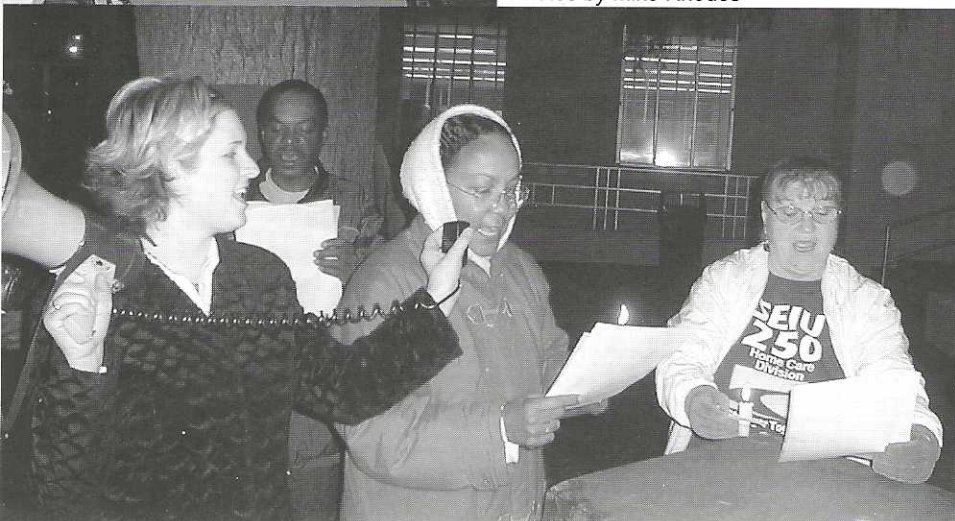


The rally at the Fresno County Courthouse drew a number of community leaders who spoke in support of the workers. The Rev. Bryan Jessup said, "Here we are gathered in a circle to honor the work that you do. . . . A living wage, respect, and appreciation are your due." Union members and community supporters chanted "Can't survive on \$6.75." Union and holiday songs were sung as county workers left the building.

Two full page ads, one with about 1,000 names of supporters, have appeared in the last couple of days in the Fresno Bee calling on the county to sign a contract that includes a living wage for home-health-care workers. SEIU 250 can be contacted at 1279 N. Wishon, Fresno, CA 93728, (559) 265-4890, or pwhalen@seiu250.org.

To see a video of the candlelight vigil and rally go to <<http://www.sunmt.org/Homenosilent.html>>.

Photos by Mike Rhodes





Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

WILPF Fresno, P.O. Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755

Vickie M. Fouts, Branch Coordinator, contact at 559.658.8260 or email at vmfout1@sti.net

WILPF Fresno Dates:

Monday, February 3, 17, and 24 at 7 PM and Feb 10 at 6 PM: Peace Camp planning meetings. The 2/10 meeting will be at the FCN before the WILPF board meeting. Contact Vickie at vmfout1@sti.net or 658-6280 for other locations.

Monday, February 10, 7 PM: WILPF board meeting at 985 N. Van Ness. All are invited to attend. Please submit agenda items to Vickie Fouts at vmfout1@sti.net or 658-8260 by 2/9.

Wednesday, February 12, 7 PM: WSSD Conference in South Africa, presentation by Joan Poss to the Sierra Club at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N. Millbrook.

Saturday, February 22, 11 AM: Education Fund Budget Committee meeting at Zay's home. See article below for details.

Sunday, February 23, 9:15 AM & 11 AM: WSSD Conference in South Africa presentation by Joan Poss at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N. Millbrook.

WILPF members receive Martin Luther King Awards

Our own *Ellie Bluestein* and Howard Watkins were honored at the Martin Luther King Jr. Evening Reception and Awards Presentation on Friday, January 17, for their work on social justice issues. Ellie's most recent work has been to implement an outside oversight authority concerning police actions through the Central California Criminal Justice Committee. Progress has been slow and positive. Howard was rewarded for his photographic documentation and involvement in activist activities. **Congratulations, Ellie and Howard, you deserve it!** WILPF members making a difference in our community; isn't that what it's all about?

Education Fund Questions

Education fund spending guidelines are being developed. Defining educational has turned into tricky business over the past few months. The branch has funded travel to the WSSD Conference in South Africa, a human rights trip to Colombia, and a Global Exchange tour to Chiapas. While this kind of work is important and many members have supplemented it by donation of additional funds for these trips, our funds are not limitless. Structured guidelines are required to balance out this kind of spending.

Education monies will be used to sponsor Peace Camp this summer. The budget for this project has not been set but can be as high as \$125 per student. This would mean an outlay of \$3,750. Outreach for other funding will be made but depletion of our account will occur quickly.

Overall, the education budget committee is defining the purposes of the fund and looking into specific fundraising activities to replenish the fund. Tentatively, the fund's purpose is to provide funding for delegates' travel to WILPF conferences, fact-finding trips, and workshops that will better educate our membership. Money-raising ideas include holding an annual art show, putting out individual appeals for each activity, and allowing recipients to develop fundraising activities. The drawback of individual appeals is that our membership will be inundated with calls for money. We do not want such a situation to develop for the membership, so if you have more ideas or wish to be on the committee, contact Zay (zaygb@earthlink.net), Desi (907-2200, desicortez@cviip.net), or Vickie (658-6280, vmfout1@sti.net).

Peace Camp

We had our first planning meeting in January for a future WILPF Peace Camp. The tentative dates are set for July 28 through August 1 at Fresno State's O'Neil Park. At this time weekly meetings are scheduled at different members' homes, so please contact Vickie at vmfout1@sti.net or 658-8260 for further details. All interested are welcome.

Legislative Report: Stop Use of Depleted Uranium

According to a front-page story in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Iraq has experienced a dramatic increase in child cancers, leukemia, and birth defects. Medical doctors there and many peace activists believe that the use of depleted uranium weapons during the Gulf War is responsible for this increase in cancer as well as for the Gulf War Syndrome that has affected 50,000 to 80,000 U.S. veterans of that war. Doug Rokke, former director of the U.S. Army's Depleted Uranium Project, who viewed the ghastly effects of soldiers burned up by depleted uranium (DU) explosions, called for an outright ban on DU, saying, "A nation's military personnel cannot willfully contaminate any other nation, cause harm to persons and the environment, then ignore the consequences of their actions. To do so is a crime against God and humanity."

DU has a half-life of 4.5 billion years and could cause a permanent medical nightmare wherever it is used. Pentagon officials deny its connection with cancer or Gulf War Syndrome and have every intention of continuing its use. Please contact your congressional representatives and senators and call for a moratorium on the use of depleted uranium weapons. For further information call Polly Victor (255-3422) or Ellie (229-9807).

Change Davis's Budget

Governor Davis's budget calls for slashes on everything from schools to health care and social services, but a 1% increase in prison funding. Yell at him! Loud! Governor Gray Davis, State Capitol Building, Sacramento, CA 95814, governor@governor.ca.gov.

Support Illinois Governor

Send a postcard to Governor George Ryan of Illinois and tell him you support his good work by commuting death penalty sentences there! Write him at The State House, Springfield, IL 62706 or send him a letter through <http://www.icadp.org/page99.html>.

Shorts:

Belated kudos to Julie Young for the great job she did in organizing the food service for the Craft Faire and for getting out our new membership roster. Your roster will be mailed out if you didn't pick it up.

Reserve May 9-11 for WILPF West Gathering in Asilomar

At this time plans are being forged for the WILPF West Gathering. Tentatively, the event will include Friday night dinner through Sunday lunch, room, board and the cost of our plenary room. Our goal is to keep the amount below \$200 (four to a room) and \$300 (two to a room) for the three days, while enabling some scholarships and supplies. Look for more details in March's newsletter. **Have you lost your a stainless steel pot, plate with floral design, and/or ladle?** Contact Desi for their return.

MARCH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: Monday, February 10th.

Submit articles to Vickie Fouts at vmfout1@sti.net or 658-8260

CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE

NEXT STEP—COLLABORATION: At the Center's annual retreat, the key theme was "collaborative activity." In my understanding, collaboration is a stage beyond coalition. The latter involves agreement to work for limited times on specific joint ventures, for example on a march, a petition drive, an election campaign. Collaboration, in contrast, implies an open-ended commitment to work together in as-yet-unspecified ways, to make common cause, to enlarge and deepen the area of mutuality.

Here is a hypothetical example of the difference. Say an organization comes to the Center to tell us about an issue they are working on. Assuming we accept the validity of their position, we can lend our name as a supporter, and/or pledge money, and/or agree to have a presence at a rally they are holding. These are examples of coalition work.

On the other hand, say we send a representative to their planning meetings, who brings the special perspective of the Center to bear on deliberations: that is the beginning of collaboration. At that point we would start looking closely at such questions as, Do the words being proposed accurately reflect our position? and, Is the money we contribute being used effectively? We have now embarked on the difficult and most rewarding work of understanding each other in depth, of learning to compromise gladly, of seeing how much we are alike (and how much we differ!), of valuing each other. We now stand together on common ground, even in adversity. It is my perception that our progressive community has stepped boldly (if perhaps without full awareness) into collaborative activity. How exciting to have Serge Hatayan [please check spelling — Author] of the American Arab Anti-discrimination Committee as a new member of the Center's Board of Directors (along with fellow newcomers Diane Scott of

NOW and the Unitarian Universalist Church, and Dan Yaseen of Peace Fresno). How wonderful that the work of all the folks in the Gap free speech action winds up financially benefiting several of our progressive organizations! A movement is forming, folks. The cautionary note is that we now have to deal with each other at close range—look each other in the eye and calmly say things like, "That doesn't work for me" and "I think you have a blind spot here" and "I don't quite agree, but I'll go along with the majority."

We can do it if we act with integrity, compassion, transparency, right intention. Avanti.

PEACE CENTERS CONFERENCE IN FRESNO

The third weekend in March has been established as the date for an annual conference of peace centers. Although centers statewide have been invited, so far (in its approximately seven-year history) it has been a North-central California affair, with groups from Fresno to Chico attending.

This year, for the second time, our Center is hosting the event, with Saturday, March 15 the primary day. A detailed calendar of activities will appear next month, but we'd like to invite the participation of local groups in several ways.

1. There will be a series of workshops on organizational issues (such as fundraising, outreach, morale building) that are relevant to many organizations.
2. We will have a keynote speaker, Tim Wise, internationally recognized as a worker for racial equality, "one of the most prominent white antiracist voices in the United States." Wise's evening address will be open to the public.
3. We are in need of housing for out-of-state attendees, for one or two nights.
4. We need logistical help with organizing food, setting up rooms, etc. If you are interested in participating in any way, you can contact Angela Price at 435-6383.

Fresno Center for Nonviolence

985 N. Van Ness • Fresno, CA 93728

Ph. (559) 237-3223 • zaygb@csufresno.edu

<http://www.fresnoalliance.com/peacefresno>

THE WELCH REPORT

January 10, 2003

Jack H. Welch, M.D.

PREPARATION FOR WAR.

I was touched by a letter to FCNV from a Louis Vitale of Nevada Desert Experience, written from federal Prison Camp at Nellis Air Force Base, N. Las Vegas. The writer was serving a three-month sentence for an action one year ago at Fort Benning, Georgia, in an effort to close the School of the Americas. (The SOA trains officers of the armies of Latin America in counterinsurgency, torture, infiltration, and even elimination.) Vitale's defense lawyer commented that Vitale and others were "a voice trying to make our country's international actions more just."

Nellis is just over the hill from the Nevada Test Site. Vitale writes, "The B-2 bombers, stealths and F-16s fly daily to the bomb range near the test site, where they have live bombing exercises simulating bombing in Iraq . . . In addition to the horror of these bombs for the people on whom they are targeted, there is the incredible waste of the cost of their development, storage, and delivery preparations." As former President Eisenhower stated, every dollar spent on weapons is a robbery from the poor and needy of the world.

Although there are billions of dollars available to prepare for and wage wars, there are very few resources for peacemaking. The writer further says, "As I look out the window of my dorm at night or from the camp chapel, I see the bunkers, hear the planes and look toward the test site. The evil presence is almost overwhelming. I pray that we can continue our efforts to resist."

HOMELAND SECURITY ISSUES

Our slumping economy, our threatened environment, our underfunded schools, our corporate scandals are not issues you will hear discussed by the White House, but they matter to people who don't have the power to define the nation's agenda.

The American people are being told that a new Department of Homeland Security will protect them, but Americans are losing their jobs and their ability to support their families. In less than two years more than two million

private-sector jobs have been lost.

"Too many hard-working people are stuck with low-wage jobs, wondering how they will make the rent payment and cover child-care costs." [DNS-Mike, we need to know who's quoted here. —Barbara] The Census Bureau recently reported that 1.3 million Americans slipped below the poverty line in the last year, meaning 11.7% of the US population now is living in poverty. More than 50% of Americans have investments in the stock market, and they have seen the value of those investments decline by more than \$4.5 trillion in the past year.

"Coal plants in the Midwest continue to spew toxic pollutants into the air, yet the administration does not see the wisdom in regulating these emissions, preferring to rely on the good-faith efforts of plant owners to police themselves. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of people are dying prematurely every year from such pollution." [DNS — Mike, same thing!] President Bush insists on moving us backward by undoing our nation's environmental policy.

The lack of funding for our schools is disgraceful. "Of the major industrial nations the US ranks among the lowest in terms of financing education at the federal level, providing only 7% of the cost." [DNS — Mike, same thing again!]

The steady erosion of economic opportunity here at home is being ignored. "If the new, razor-thin Republican majority abuses its power and moves forward with an extreme agenda that overlooks the concerns of the many and benefits only the privileged few, there will be repercussions." [DNS — Mike, same thing!] (Source: James Jeffords, independent (former Republican), junior senator from Vermont, *New York Times*, 30 Nov. 2002)

FRESNO COUNTY S M E N GREEN PARTY

California Greens Gather at Stanford University

Over the weekend of January 10–12, Greens gathered from around the state to celebrate the many successes of the last election and plan for future growth. The keynote speaker was Peter Camejo, the gubernatorial candidate that Gray Davis was afraid to debate last fall. Camejo rebutted the claim that Green candidates serve only as spoilers and described the current two-party system as “an imperialist ruling class running our country.” Laura Wells, who ran for state controller, also spoke and confirmed the growth in the Green message by pointing out that she got more votes than Ralph Nader did in California.

The Fresno County Green Party was well represented with six people in attendance. This was our largest contingent at a state meeting (aside from the one held in Fresno). The next state meeting will be May 2–4 in Sacramento. Plan to attend!

Campus Greens Emerging Force on Fresno Campuses

Rapid progress is being made by those organizing Campus Greens at FCC and CSUF. Sponsors have come forth and a membership roster is being developed. If you want to get involved, contact Nick DeGraff at ndegraff@hotmail.com for more information.

Local Greens Participate in SF Peace March

Greens were well represented among the group of Fresnoans who traveled to San Francisco on January 18 for the march against war. The Fresno County Green Party sponsored five of its members to travel on the bus chartered from Fresno. At the march, the Fresno contingent joined many other Greens from around the state to proclaim the party's commitment to nonviolent resolution of international conflicts. Unlike the Republicrats, the Green Party realizes that our foreign policy has been warped by our addiction to fossil fuels. We must shift our investment from nonsensical programs like Star Wars to the development of reliable renewable energy.

Greens Applaud Governor Ryan's Death Penalty Decision

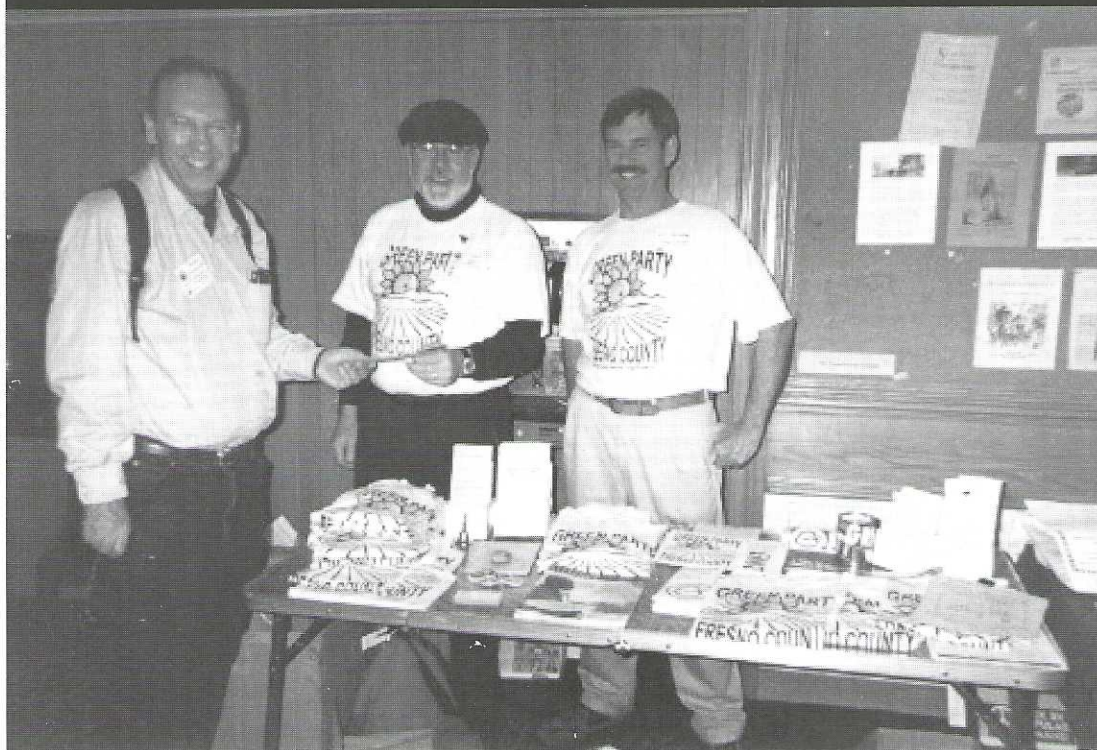
The California Green Party affirmed last month's decision by outgoing Governor Ryan of Illinois to commute every death sentence to life in prison. Unfortunately, we cannot expect similar action from our own Governor Davis. Events such as this make plain the different path our state would be on had Peter Camejo been elected governor.

The Green Scene Radio Show

As shown in the **Fresno County Green Party Inaugural 2003 Quotations Calendar** (available at The Movies), you can tune into the Green Scene on February 19, 2003, at 3:30 PM. Tune in to KFCF 88.1 to hear interim hosts Sandra Guzman and Justin Morgan discuss Green issues with guests and callers.

The Fresno County Green Party will hold its monthly meeting on February 13, 2003, at 7:00 PM at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Come get involved! Need a speaker at an event? Contact us at 265-3647.

Pictured here are former Secretary of State candidate Larry Shoup with local Fresno County Green Party members Larry Mullen and Dirk Van Gelder.



Saturday, February 1 • 9 AM

Kennedy Club of the San Joaquin Valley meets first Saturday of the month at Denny's Restaurant at Abby and Divisadero. This month: "What Went Wrong" with speaker Dr. David Schechter, CSUF political science professor and TV political analyst. Call 439-8140 for more information. <<http://home.att.net/~barbarapyle/kennedy/kennedy.htm>>

Sunday, February 2 • 2-4 PM

Renew Your Spirit of Nonviolence Workshop, Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness. This year we will concentrate on Gandhi's strategy of a "constructive program" using the basic need for food. We will envision a constructive program for Fresno and the Central Valley. Diane Marks will talk about Gandhi's constructive program and some alternative economic structures. Phil Erro will talk about the "greening" of agriculture. For more information or questions, call Diane Marks 642-3793.

Sunday, February 2 • 2-5 PM

Reception for *Children and War Reassembled*, a sculpture exhibit by Polly Victor, will be at Gallery 25, 1526 Fulton Ave, Fresno. The exhibit will run from January 31 through February 23. For more information, call 264-4092.

Thursday, February 6 • 6-7:30 PM

"The Axis of Evil and the Holy Alliance." Dr. Sasan Fayazmanesh, Professor of Economics, California State University, Fresno, will be the speaker in this educational lecture on the US involvement in the Middle East and alternatives to war. This event will be held at the Alice Peters Auditorium, University Business Center 191. Forum sponsors: Beth Anne Harnish Lectures, Campus Peace and Civil Liberties Coalition, Peace Fresno, Multicultural Center Planning Group, President's Commission on Human Relations and Equity. Entrance is free and open to the public, with relaxed parking in Lot V.

Friday, February 7 • 7:30 PM

The Fresno Folklore Society presents The Memory Theater Band: James Leva, Rose Sinclair, & Gary Wright, three versatile musicians and singers from Virginia, appearing for the first time in Fresno. See <www.jamesleva.com>. \$12 advance & FFS members; \$15 at door. Advance purchase available 3 weeks prior to performance at Patrick's Music Store at Barstow & First; The Movies Video Store, 1435 Van Ness Ave; National Hardware (new outlet), 7173 N. Blackstone in Pinedale. Early birds and out-of-towners, send check and SASE to Pat Wolk, 6661 N. Forkner, Fresno 93711. Information: 431-3653.

Saturday, February 8 • 8 AM-Noon

Citrus Donation Saturday. Those with extra citrus fruit are encouraged to bring it to the Garden of the Sun, 1944 N Winery (north of McKinley, next to the Discovery Center). Fruit will be distributed to area food pantries through the Community Food Bank. Sponsored by Plant A Row for the Hungry, a project of the UC Cooperative Extension Master Gardener program. For more information contact laurielp@csufresno.edu, or call 225-1818.

Saturday, February 8 • 8:30 AM-5:30 PM

First Annual Drift Conference. See page 5 for more information.

Wednesday, February 12 • 7:00 PM

WSSD Conference in South Africa Presentation by Joan Poss to the Sierra Club at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N. Millbrook.

Thursday and Friday, February 13-14

There is going to be a historic gathering of folks from or speaking on behalf of revolutionary environmental groups in the US at Fresno State. See page 5 for more information.

Thursday, February 13 • 6-7:30 PM

Iraq: The Hidden Wars and Regime Change. Joe Stork, Director for the Middle East and North Africa division of Human Rights Watch, Washington, DC, will be the speaker in this educational lecture on the US involvement in the Middle East and alternatives to war. This event will be held at CSUF in the Alice Peters Auditorium, University Business Center 191. Forum sponsors: Beth Anne Harnish Lectures, Campus Peace and Civil Liberties Coalition, Peace Fresno, Multicultural Center Planning Group, President's Commission on Human Relations and Equity. Entrance is free and open to the public with relaxed parking in Lot V.

Friday, February 14 • 5 PM & 8 PM

Fresno Filmworks presents *Me, You, Them*, a love story from Brazil, which is probably like none you've ever seen: one woman with three lovers, all at the same time, each gratifying her in different ways. Fresno Filmworks movies are shown at the Tower Theatre. Tickets are \$8.50; \$6.50 for students and seniors. For more information, call 221-0755.

Saturday, Feb. 15 • 12:00 Noon

International Day of Protest Against U.S. War on Iraq. See details on page 3.

Tuesday, February 18 • 6-7:30 PM

The Key to an Israeli-Palestinian Peace: Dismantling Israel's Matrix of Control. Dr. Jeff Halper, Professor of Anthropology and Coordinator of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAH), a coalition of Israel peace and human rights organizations that join with Palestinian groups to actively resist the occupation, will be the speaker in this educational lecture on the US involvement in the Middle East and alternatives to war. This event will be held at CSUF in the Alice Peters Auditorium, University Business Center 191. Forum sponsors: Beth Anne Harnish Lectures, Campus Peace and Civil Liberties Coalition, Peace Fresno, Multicultural Center Planning Group, President's Commission on Human Relations and Equity. Entrance is free and open to the public with relaxed parking in Lot V.

Wednesday, February 19 • 3:30 PM

Tune in to Stir It Up! for the Green Scene on KFCF 88.1 FM! Engineered by Richard Gomez and with new hosts Sandra Guzman and Justin Morgan from the Fresno County Green Party, this program focuses on Green values, including ecological wisdom, social justice, and grassroots democracy.

Thursday, February 20 • 6:00 PM

Join us for the Second February 20th National Day of Solidarity with Muslim, Arab, and South Asian Immigrants for a candlelight vigil, nationally organized by the Blue Triangle Network www.BlueTriangle.org The location has not yet been determined. For further information or endorsement contact Vickie Fouts vmfou1@sti.net or (559) 658-8260.

Saturday, February 22

Race Judicata, a Competitive Run on the Old Clovis Trail. T-shirts, Music, Awards. \$15 Adults, \$8 Kids. All proceeds to benefit the Judy Wiseman Memorial Scholarship Fund. For more information, call 323-2100

Saturday, February 22 • 7:30 PM

The Fresno Folklore Society presents singer/songwriter Jane Voss, and Hoyle Osborne, piano. Dave Van Ronk has described Voss's singing as a model of passion and control, and her compositions as both literate and vernacular. \$12 Advance & FFS members; \$15 at door. Under 12, half price. See <www.janevoss.net>. Advance purchase available 3 weeks prior to performance at Patrick's Music Store at Barstow & First; The Movies Video Store, 1435 Van Ness Ave; National Hardware (new outlet), 7173 N. Blackstone in Pinedale. Early birds and out-of-towners, send check and SASE to Pat Wolk, 6661 N. Forkner, Fresno 93711. Information: 431-3653.

Sunday, February 23 • 9:15 AM & 11 AM

WSSD Conference in South Africa Presentation by Joan Poss at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N. Millbrook.

Tuesday, February 25 • All Day

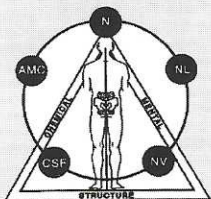
Buy green and support FRESNO EARTH DAY 2003! Community Support Day, Whole Foods Market in the Fig Garden Shopping Center. 5% of the profits will go to the Fresno Earth Day Committee. To find out more: www.fresnoalliance.com/earthday or call (559)243-9338.

Thursday, February 27 • 6-7:30 PM

Religious Fundamentalism and the Middle East: Who Prays, Who Pays? Margot Patterson, senior staff writer for the *National Catholic Reporter*, will be the speaker in this educational lecture on the US involvement in the Middle East and alternatives to war. This event will be held at CSUF, in the Alice Peters Auditorium, University Business Center 191. Forum sponsors: Beth Anne Harnish Lectures, Campus Peace and Civil Liberties Coalition, Peace Fresno, Multicultural Center Planning Group, President's Commission on Human Relations and Equity. Entrance is free and open to the public with relaxed parking in Lot V.

Friday, February 28 • 7 P

Vagina Monologues benefit performances at CSU-Fresno. A celebration of Women's Sexuality and Visions. \$15 general & \$8 students/seniors. For more information call 292-1420 or email nikkifresno@yahoo.com. More information is available at <www.vday.org>



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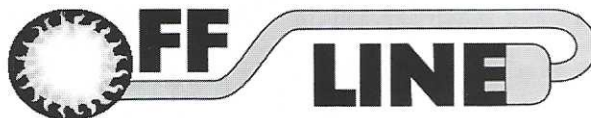
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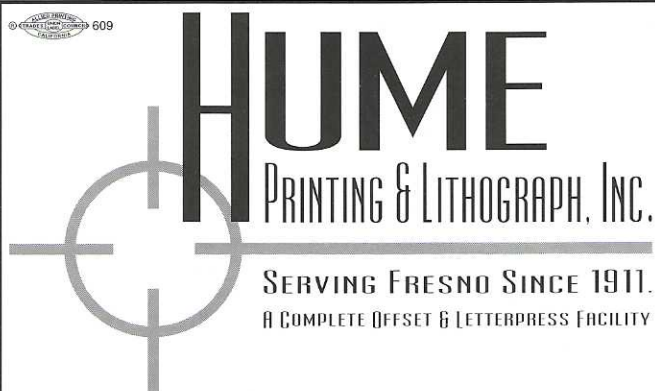
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Death Penalty Stopped!

by Maria Telesco

Former Illinois governor George Ryan incurred the wrath of prosecutors and murder victims' families when, on his last day in office, he commuted 164 death sentences to life without parole, pardoned four innocent men, freeing three of them (the fourth will continue serving time for another crime), and reduced the sentences of three others to 40 years, to match those of their crime partners.

Three years ago, Ryan, then a death-penalty proponent, declared a moratorium on executions, when more innocent men (13) were freed than executed (12). Wondering how many more innocents there were, he empanelled a commission to examine the system so that sentences could be imposed and executed "fairly." This commission determined the system couldn't be fixed—no matter what safeguards were taken, innocents could be executed. Unable to select who deserved mercy, Ryan chose the only moral option available to him—blanket clemency.

Studies estimate that of the 3,700 death row occupants across the country, up to 15 percent could be factually innocent. This happens for many reasons:

A perpetrator might testify against an innocent person, to spare his or her own life.

Faulty evidence, such as erroneous eyewitness testimony or inaccurate DNA testing, might be presented.

Corrupt police, prosecutors, or judges can make political hay from the number they banish to death row; some even resort to falsifying evidence to obtain convictions.

Defense counsel can often be ineffective.

Prosecutors promise victims' families they will experience "closure" when their loved one's killer is executed, and often berate families who oppose the death penalty. Survivors say watching someone die doesn't assuage their grief, yet politicians persist in claiming execution comforts survivors.

Ryan, a Republican, said in his hour-long speech that the public would be better served if the money spent on executions, often millions per case, were used to provide victims' families with material aid instead of empty promises—psychological counseling, medical care, and funeral expenses.

In retaliation for his action, Ryan wasn't surprised to get hate mail and threats of violence, as well as threats by detractors to have him prosecuted for alleged corruption during his tenure as secretary of state (before becoming governor). Some victims' relatives say he "dishonored" their dead loved ones, and prosecutors proclaim there is no such thing as a wrongfully convicted innocent person.

Within hours of his action, abolitionists nominated former Governor Ryan for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Former Maryland governor Parris Glendening also declared a moratorium on executions, but didn't commute any sentences before leaving office. His successor says he will resume executions immediately.

California has the nation's largest death row: 617 condemned men, 14 women. Governor Gray Davis said he has no intention of following Ryan's lead, because "California has an appeal process."

The struggle for abolition continues. The Fresno chapter of Death Penalty Focus meets on the third Thursday of each month at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N. Van Ness in the Tower District. The next meeting will be February 20 at 7:30 PM. For information: 255-9492.

Race Judicata, A Run For The Law

The hallways of San Joaquin College of Law seem much emptier since third year law student, 32 year old Judy Wiseman, lost her heroic battle with melanoma. This year's Race Judicata will honor Judy's memory with a special memorial scholarship fund set up to help needy, qualified students. On Saturday, February 22, 2003, athletes from around the Valley will gather at the law school for a race through the streets of Clovis and on the Old Town Trail. The event will feature a 5K run, 2 mile run/walk, and a 1/4 mile kids run. For more information, call 323-2100.

It's Our Choice!

by Carol Bequette

In early January many Fresnoans received an invitation with the following wording on its cover:

PUBLIC HEARING

A meeting will be held on the first of this month to determine whether women should retain the right to vote.

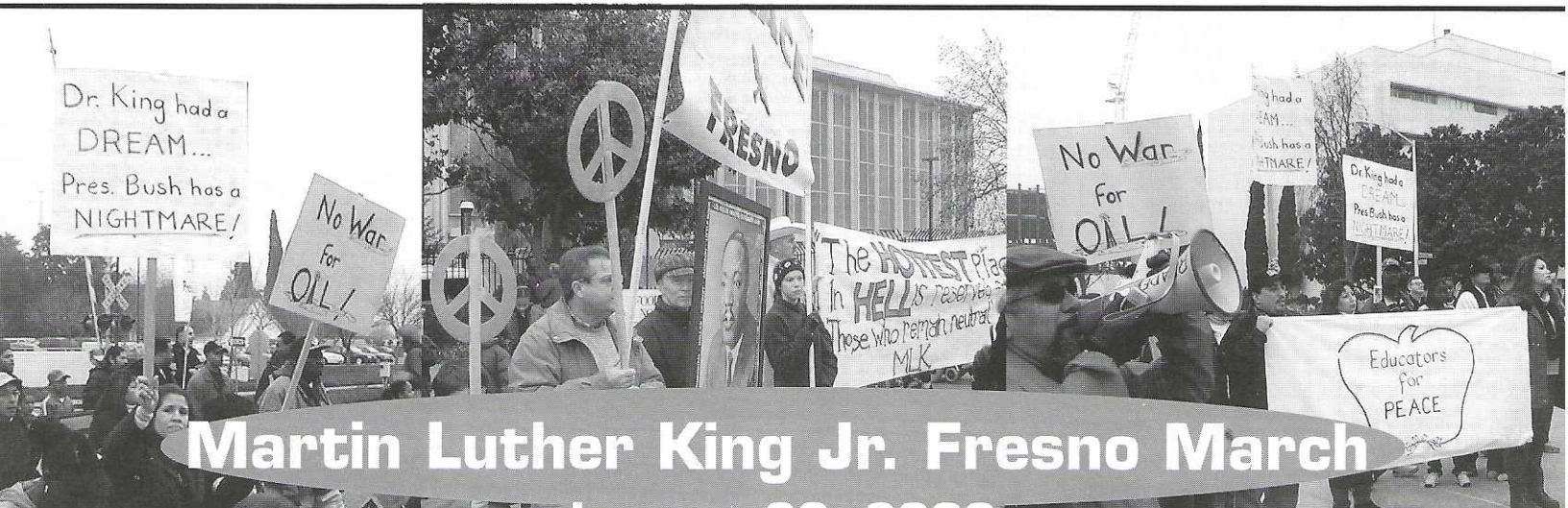
If a woman loses her reproductive rights, who knows what rights she could lose next.

It was an invitation to a commemoration of Roe v. Wade at age thirty, hosted by Planned Parenthood Mar Monte and National Women's Political Caucus—Fresno County. The first line inside the invitation read, "Women have the right to define their future."

Women born since the 1973 Supreme Court decision tend to take for granted the availability of legal abortions as a choice. Many of us who are somewhat older remember when the only legal abortions were performed in Mexico under unsafe conditions. Do-it-yourself abortions (à la coat hangers) were common, leading to death or damage to the uterus. For women with resources (\$500 and up), there was at least one doctor here in Fresno who made a lot of tax-free income in the abortion business but, in the process, women were sometimes physically harmed because of the lack of adequate follow-up and the possibility of infection.

So we must celebrate what we've had for the past thirty years but be vigilant in protecting the woman's right to privacy guaranteed by Roe v. Wade. We have a president who is opposed to that right and has the power to make Supreme Court appointments. Some political observers believe that because there is a Republican in the White House, conservative Supreme Court justices will resign to give President Bush the appointments he wants. (Here in California we need to appreciate that Senator Sheila Kuehl got a bill passed that codifies Roe v. Wade in the California constitution. California will have that right no matter what the Supreme Court does.)

Support Planned Parenthood and NARAL Pro-Choice America, who will be leading the fight to guarantee that "women have the right to ensure their own future."



Martin Luther King Jr. Fresno March

January 20, 2003

