

Calendar of Events * July 1997

Tuesday, July 1

Video Night, 7 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N. Van Ness: "Nukes in Space."

Monday, July 7

Kaiser Strike Rally, Noon, Kaiser Park, Alluvial at Fresno Street: speakers, food, solidarity.

July 11-13

LaborTECH '97: Communication Tools for the 21st Century, San Francisco State University: A coalition of labor activists and union communicators meet for workshops sharing the cutting edge of technological tools joined with the primary goal of labor today: organizing. Details, p. 7.

Saturday, July 12

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

Tuesday, July 15

Deadline for submission of information for July issue of *Labor/Community Alliance*. Call 226-2078 for information.

Thursday, July 17

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

Saturday, July 19

Critical Mass Bike Rally: environmental/transportation activists, meets the third Saturday each month, 5 P.M., at Fresno City College (Van Ness side).

Sunday, July 20

Meditation for World Peace, 10 A.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N. Van Ness. Led by Veena Kapoor. Meets every third Sunday. Call 435-2212 for information.

Monday, July 21

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

Saturday, July 26

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), 5:30 P.M.: swim party, pot luck dinner, Irish music and report on Ireland, in lieu of regular monthly meeting usually held the third Saturday of the month. Call 229-9661.

Monday, July 28

Labor Party, Frank Little Chapter Fresno Center for Nonviolence

Monday, July 28 5:30 P.M.

985 N. Van Ness

(between Olive and Belmont)

Call 226-2078 for information.

Everyone is welcome.

Ongoing Activities/Events

Free Radio Fresno, 102.3-FM, is back on the air. Tune in and support the micro-power revolution!

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.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, August 31

Annual Labor Day Picnic, noon to 6 P.M., California State University, Fresno. Watch this space for details!

Please . . .

Labor/Community Alliance needs your help (read: your money). Please donate what you can, as often as you can!

And thank you!

Thanks to all who have so generously contributed! We have not been able to personally thank each of you often enough, but the fact is that without your donations, we couldn't survive. You're wonderful!

Stop the embargo against Cuba!

by Mike Rhodes

Terri Anderson, who lives in Hanford, is back from her third trip to Cuba. She works with Pastors for Peace delivering medical and other supplies to the tiny island nation of 11 million people. "Over the two and a half years since my first trip, considerable changes have taken place, as the Cuban government strives to find its unique way of getting into the new world economy, without losing the highly valued benefits gained from their 38-year-old revolution," Anderson said.

This endeavor has been made extremely difficult by the U.S. government imposing a trade embargo, which more accurately can be viewed as a worldwide economic blockade. With the disintegration of the Soviet bloc in 1989, Cuba lost its Eastern European trading partners, and the U.S. government viewed this change as an opportunity to force a change in Cuba's form of government—from socialism to capitalism. Passing legislation such as the Torricelli Bill, which penalized any ship stopping in Cuba from entering U.S. harbors for the following six months, and the more recent Helms-Burton Law, the U.S. has brought about financial chaos, tremendous suffering and loss of life on its neighbor. Still, Cuba continues to refuse to allow the U.S. to dictate its form of government or its leader. Ms. Anderson says: "my Cuban friends of varying ages and dozens of people I've met casually assure me that the Cuban people are more committed than ever to their political and economic self-determination."



Pastors for Peace stopped in Fresno for an event at the Center for Nonviolence last May on their way to Cuba. Ms. Anderson addressed the gathering before they left for the border. Nobody knew if U.S. customs would

try to stop them (as they have in the past) from crossing the border with their medical supplies. When the activists arrived in San Diego, they formed a caravan of 22 vans and buses, ambulances, cars and trucks, some to be donated to Cuba and others simply driven by supporters who wished to join the group for the border crossing.

In a surprise move the Treasury Department sought to avoid a protracted struggle with the Pastors for Peace-sponsored caravan by initiating an offer to allow the aid to go to Cuba, Anderson said. During six previous caravans, the U.S. government has seized aid, issued grand jury subpoenas and otherwise attempted to stop the aid from getting to Cuba. In the past the activists had been told that they would be arrested for "trading with the enemy," a citation that could result in heavy fines and perhaps even jail time. "This time it was much easier to get through," she said.

Anderson is adamant when she says that "the United States should trade with Vietnam, China, Cuba and other countries whose political ideals are different from those of wealthy individuals and multinational corporations." Anderson said, "There are members of congress right now who would vote to remove the blockade if their constituents asked them to do it." She urges everyone to make their support known by writing to their representatives.

Motherhood, apple pie, and "volunteerism"

by Norman Solomon, *Creators Syndicate*, via *Stanislaus Connections*, June '97
For Bill Clinton, the summit in Philadelphia—which he co-hosted with George Bush—was the political equivalent of a slam dunk. Fervent appeals for volunteers to save our young people were sure to generate plenty of cheers. With 2,000 delegates expected from around the country, the White House assumed that the news media would treat the spectacle with apple-pie reverence. After all, only a nitwit doubts that Americans should go out of their way to help each other.



We've been here before. Remember President Bush's "Thousand Points of Light"? Near the close of the 1980s—with much of the nation reeling from "trickle down" economics that subsidized the rich and under-

mined the rest of us—Bush launched a major rhetorical drive to promote voluntary good deeds. Countless news stories boosted the volunteer theme. Typical was a *Christian Science Monitor* article published in November 1989 under the headline "A Thousand Points of Light to Shine." The *Monitor* breathlessly reported that Bush "will be asking every commercial establishment to join voluntarily in efforts to find solutions for such problems as illiteracy, dropouts, drug abuse, unwed teen pregnancy, youth delinquency and suicide, AIDS, homelessness, hunger, unemployment and loneliness."

Then, as now, the man in the Oval Office was anxious to have it both ways—cutting back on government aid to people in need while posing as a champion of compassion. In a country ablaze with grave crises, that's like the fire chief urging everyone to fill their squirt guns.

Reliance on volunteerism means that the unfortunate in our society will remain at the mercy of the ebb and flow of meager charitable resources. This has been going on for a very long time. In retrospect—despite the prodigious output of media blather and the abundant hot air from the Bush White House—the thousand points of light were no match for the nation's million points of blight.

Proclaiming that volunteerism can overcome deep-rooted social ills is profoundly ideological. It's the rough equivalent of telling people that they should figure out how to fix crumbling roads and bridges themselves, rather than expect help from the government. The Summit for America's Future—featuring retired Gen. Colin Powell as well as Clinton and former presidents—was bound to get big media play. But it promised to be much ado about next to nothing. In essence, Clinton and other summit leaders are fiddling with easy rhetoric while social problems burn.