



VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

JANUARY 1, 1997

Local shoppers learn about Disney sweatshops

Fashion Fair Protest Well-Attended, Well-Received

Can you imagine trying to live on 30 cents an Hour? That is exactly what Haitian women sewing Disney's 101 Dalmatians children's clothing are paid.

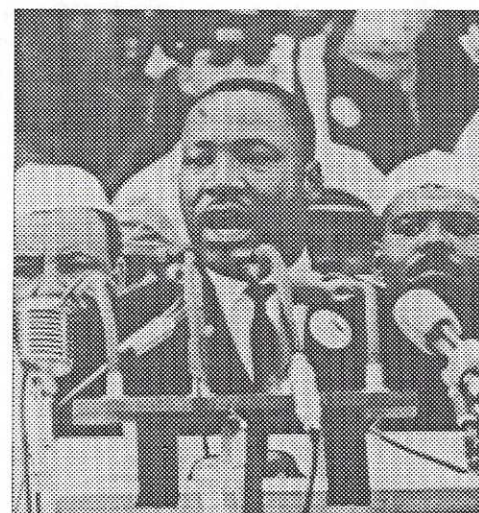
The National Labor Committee (NLC) initiated an international week of action, December 7-14, to call upon the Disney Company to take a stand against sweatshops. "Disney should demand that its contractors around the world guarantee respect for basic human rights and end the practice of exploiting the misery of Third World countries that forces wages below subsistence levels, such as the 30 cent an hour wages paid to workers in Haiti who are sewing Disney Garments" stated Charles Kernaghan, executive director of the (NLC).

Mickey and Minnie mouse were at the Fresno Fashion Fair mall—home to the local Disney Store—to denounce the Disney Company's use of sweatshops. They were joined by dozens of protestors from community and labor groups holding signs and banners and gathering signatures calling on the Disney Company to pay a living wage to the people who make their clothing.

The Fresno protest was organized by the Labor Party (Frank Little Chapter), Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and the Latin American Support Committee. With an overflow crowd of activists at the main entrance to the mall, many went to Shaw Avenue to hold banners and pass out fliers.

Pam Whalen, spokesperson for the local action, said the response from passersby was very positive. "This is an issue that people can understand. Companies close factories in the US and move to the Third World to increase their profits. With the globalization of the marketplace it is essential to support workers rights worldwide."

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, who brought out many of their members for the protest, used the day as their Human Rights day event. The theme A LIVING WAGE IS A HUMAN RIGHT was on many of the banners and posters.



A PROPHET'S WORDS

by Richard Stone

I heard Martin Luther King, Jr. in person one time, at my cousin's graduation. King was not yet a national figure—in fact the Civil Rights struggle had been brought to my attention not by the mass media but by a single speaking engagement (by Robert Moses of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) at the school I attended. So it was with some surprise that I encountered the eloquence and passion of this dark man in a dark robe, obscured in the dim lighting of an outdoor ceremony. This was a voice to heed...it would be worthwhile to take note of his name.

In typical tributes to King, we are not reminded of the time when he was an obscure figure; nor of the times when he was as much maligned as hailed. Yet in the years right before the assassination, as he tried to organize in the North for economic justice, as he spoke out bitterly against American racist imperialism and the war in Viet Nam, his

