



VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1



JANUARY 1998

## Fresno teachers demand justice

by Jim Schlotz, Associate Executive Director,  
Fresno Teachers Association

Some 1,200 angry teachers marched on the Fresno Unified school board meeting Dec. 11, demanding respect, equity and fairness. The Fresno Teachers Association CTA/NEA organized the march because the district had been refusing to acknowledge a major equity issue, and had been refusing to budge off a low-ball 3 percent salary offer.



After the rally the district agreed to negotiate over the equity issue. The district also agreed to a joint budget review with FTA to identify more money for salaries. "This is a tremendous first-step success," said Carol Massey, president of the 4,000-member union. "Our members want respect and a fair raise. Last Thursday, our members made sure the school board knew we would not accept anything less."

## Wrong-headed priorities

Beginning in 1994, the school board approved a series of extra raises for administrators, diverting money away from classroom programs and teachers' salaries. Downtown bureaucrats and school principals saw their pay increase 10-14 percent, while teachers' pay increased less than 5 percent in the same period.

When FTA confronted the administration over this inequity, they justified their actions by claiming that their jobs had gotten harder. This infuriated teachers even more. Teachers' responsibilities have burgeoned in the last decade. They are faced with growing numbers of students living in poverty, language barriers, and new literacy and math programs, while salaries and supply budgets have stagnated.

"Teachers are angry because the board puts downtown bureaucrats ahead of the classroom and teachers," said Massey. "At the same time they spent extra money on administrator pay, they cut the very successful 'Reading Recovery' program. We want the board to put the classroom and teachers first."

FTA plans to use the momentum from the rally to bargain a fair raise and a resolution to the administrator/teacher pay inequity issue. "Our march of 1,200 members moved the board off its position, but we will be prepared to bring more to another school board meeting if the board does any more stonewalling," said Massey.

Monday, January 19, 1998

### Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. March and Program

11:30 A.M. Meet at City Hall to march to Saroyan Theatre

1 P.M. Program at the Saroyan Theatre, featuring speakers and performers from throughout Fresno. Please bring a can of food for the Francis X. Singleton Emergency Food Assistance Program. See enclosed calendar for additional Martin Luther King events.



### 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. In addition  
to providing the basis for mutual support  
between labor and community groups,  
this newsletter will be used to promote  
dialog on the subject of creating an  
independent political party for the  
U.S. working class.

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## Rowdy crowd is just what the Klan ordered

by Larry Langford, Labor/Community Alliance

A rally by the Ku Klux Klan at Fresno State University on Nov. 15 might well have been mistaken for a bit of theater of the absurd, had it not been for the presence of more than two dozen police officers in full riot gear.

The rally was scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m., but well before that anti-Klan protesters began putting up banners near the spot where the rally was to take place. The banners carried such slogans as "Hate is not a family value," "We're All God's Children," and "Krap, Krap, Krap."

At about 6:15, a young man named Joe Hall had the temerity to appear alone carrying a sign supporting the Klan's right to hold its rally. The crowd, which had been growing by the minute, surrounded him, shouting things like "You killed my uncle!" and "Separate your white ass from us!"

The arrival of a small group of Neo-Nazis from Visalia provided a new focus for the crowd's anger. The anti-Klan protesters surged toward the group of about six men and women, wearing swastikas and SS symbols, who were themselves surrounded by a cordon of riot police.

"This is not as much fun as I thought it was going to be."

The police immediately began escorting the area. This withdrawal became the crowd chasing the police and the Nazis through the Fresno State Peace Garden and around the library. Only when the crowd had reached the parking lot did the police regain control of the situation and force everyone back to the Free Speech Area.

The police immediately began escorting the Nazis away from the came a foot race, with

The Klan rally itself did not begin until about 6:40, when a group of 10 Klansmen, some wearing white hoods and robes, others carrying round shields, and still others carrying American, Confederate and California state flags, led by Christopher Johnson, California Klan Imperial Dragon, marched toward the Free Speech Area with a large police escort.

For the first 10 minutes, Johnson made no attempt to address the crowd, simply playing music on a small cassette player held up to a megaphone. When he began to speak, the crowd's loud antagonism and his inability to use the megaphone properly made most of what he said inaudible. He did thank everyone for coming out in support of the Klan and claimed that they were there in defense of the First Amendment. Most of the rest of his speech had something to do with white people being the most oppressed race in the country, and with the great harm he believed that African-Americans, whom he alternately referred to as "Negroes" and "mud," were doing to the country.

Needless to say, the crowd was in no mood to listen to anything he had to say. Jeers, obscenities and repeated shouts of "Show your face!" greeted everything Johnson said. The absurdity of the situation was only heightened by a police helicopter circling overhead. As one young woman standing near me said, "This is not as much fun as I thought it was going to be."

After 25 minutes, the Klan marched away under police escort. Johnson was quoted as saying that he thought the rally was a success, and he is absolutely right. The crowd at Fresno State, which should have been attending the peace rally being staged simultaneously at Fresno's Courthouse Park, only confirmed the Klan's fantasy about itself as an oppressed minority valiantly defending the constitution. Shouting obscenities at the Ku Klux Klan might give some people a sense of self-righteous satisfaction, but it also provides the Klan with wonderful propaganda material. Anyone whose actions make the Klan look reasonable and tempered in comparison is doing the cause of freedom in this country no service.

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## History repeats itself

### The latest rent-a-slave plan

*by Del Berg, Congress of California Seniors & Former Bracero Crew Member*

The commonly called "Bracero" program instituted by President Roosevelt during WWII to alleviate the labor shortage in agriculture was not an act of Congress; it was a presidential decree called "Public Law 78." Under its terms workers were contracted to come to the United States for farm labor, mainly from Mexico but also from the Caribbean Islands.

The saying that capitalism with its drive for the ultimate in private profit corrupts everything it touches was definitely true of that program. What opened the door to fast-buck operators was that there didn't seem to be any well-thought-out preparations for implementing it, or clear provisions for housing, meals, transportation, etc. And labor contractors were not supposed to be involved.

In actual fact, labor contractors took over complete control of the program. It was their camps the workers stayed in, their buses that transported the workers to work, and it was their decision as to what jobs the workers were sent to, and at what wages. If they were sent to a job such as springtime berry picking, where it wasn't possible to make more than a couple dollars a day, they could do nothing about it. The workers were under complete control of the contractors.

A factor compelling foreign workers to take advantage of every opportunity to make even a dollar was that in most cases poverty-stricken families in Mexico went into debt to send one of their members to the United States to earn whatever they could to send home. That the system of Bracero labor procurement in Mexico became a notorious lucrative racket was no secret.

One of the provisions of the program was that the foreign workers would be used only where domestic workers were unavailable. In line with that provision, any unemployed domestic worker had the right to be hired wherever foreign workers were employed, and a corresponding number of the latter had to be laid off. In the few cases after coming back from military service, when I worked on Bracero crews, no one was laid off when I was hired.

Finally when I couldn't even get on a Bracero crew I decided something was wrong that should be corrected. I contacted the national secretary and West Coast representative of the AFL-affiliated Agricultural Workers Union. We initiated organizing in my area. We had no funds. I paid the hall rent for our first meeting, out of my pocket. How we were able, in cooperation with other movements and unions working to organize farm labor, to get the Eisenhower administration to terminate the Bracero program is a story too long to tell here.

There is no denying there was an unmet need for farm labor during WWII. Now we have some in agribusiness cry-

ing crocodile tears, trying to get us to believe we have a similar problem today. With developments like "Welfare Reform" forcing people to take any job under any conditions, at any wages, do we need a new rent-a-slave program? We don't, but capital does. It fits into the corporate super-profit agenda with its temporary workers, downsizing and union busting.



*Dolores Huerta and other advocates talk to the press in the lobby of the Centre Plaza Holiday Inn in Fresno on December 5.*

## Farmworker advocates denounce grower claims of labor shortages

**Counties urged to focus on legitimate issues raised by Welfare Reform**

At Fresno's Centre Plaza Holiday Inn Dec. 5, the United Farmworkers of America (UFW), AFL-CIO and other farmworker advocates held a press conference to respond to persistent claims by California growers that there are labor shortages that will necessitate federal guest worker legislation.

"There are no shortages. Period," said Dolores Huerta of the UFW. "The growers are crying like Chicken Little that the sky is falling in, when they know that there are enough workers out there to fill their needs. It is not coincidental that this effort to get new guest worker legislation comes on the heels of successful organizing campaigns by the UFW."

Recent newspaper articles have cited growers' claims of labor shortages in various parts of California, blaming them, in part, on increased INS enforcement, and suggesting that the only solution is a new guest worker program. "There is absolutely no evidence that the INS raids have had or will have a significant impact on the farm labor supply nationally, or in California," said Bruce Goldstein of the Farmworker Justice Fund. What's more, according to Cynthia Rice of the CRLA Foundation, "growers point to welfare reform, claiming it is their last hope, when in fact anecdotal and statistical evidence shows there are enough workers."

*United Farm Workers of America*



# Labor News



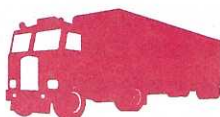
**Jobs? What jobs?** The rhetoric of welfare reform lags far behind the reality: The odds are 97-1 against a welfare worker finding a job that pays a living wage, and as welfare reform pushes people out of the system there is only one job for every two job seekers, a new report reveals. Released on the National Day of

Action for Welfare/Workfare Justice Dec. 8, the Jobs with Justice report shows that *pushing people off assistance forces down the wages of other workers in the low-wage labor market by almost \$36 billion annually.* The report also includes a state-by-state breakdown documenting the lack of jobs and the severe impact of welfare reform on the working poor. "We simply don't have enough jobs for workers," AFL-CIO President John Sweeney said. Thousands of union members, community and religious activists, welfare recipients and workfare workers marched and rallied in 50 cities on the Day of Action to raise public awareness and urge the public and private sectors to create more jobs. To get the report call JwJ, 202-434-1106.



**Santa knows.** Santa Claus led a parade of about 100 janitors to three downtown Sacramento buildings cleaned by Somers Building Maintenance and delivered bags filled with the janitors' holiday wishes: dignity, respect, decent wages and family health

care. The parade was held to draw attention to the bleak Christmas faced by low-wage workers at Somers who have been trying to unionize with SEIU Local 1877. They have suffered threats, intimidation and firings during the almost three-year drive. The **Sacramento Justice for Janitors** campaign is planning a week of street actions in January to continue the pressure on Somers. The week of activity will culminate in a march on Thursday, Jan. 22, at noon in downtown Sacramento. "The success of the Justice for Janitors campaign in Sacramento will give a strong boost to organizing efforts in the Central Valley," said Eliseo Medina, SEIU Executive Vice President.



**No "spitting."** Workers at Chacon Co. in San Leandro didn't let management SPIT (spy, promise, intimidate and threaten) on them. Instead, they voted

to join Operating Engineers Local 3. The company hired Northern California's biggest union-busting law firm, but not one of the 17 drivers and loaders voted against the union.



**UFW and Visalia nursery sign contract.** L.E.

Cooke, Co., one of the Valley's largest nurseries, signed its first-ever labor contract with the United Farm Workers in Visalia on Dec. 11. The Visalia nursery supplies rose, flower and tree fruit plants to growers through the state. The contract covers the company's 100 year-round and 250 seasonal workers. The contract includes the workers' first pension plan and calls for a 15-cent-per-hour pay raise.

*The Fresno Bee*



**Hanford workers sign contract with Pirelli.**

The nearly 600 members of United Steelworkers of America Local 703 at Pirelli Tire Corp. in Hanford have signed an unprecedented six-year contract. It provides a new wage structure and incentive system, a hike in a pension multiplier, and continuation of cost-of-living allowances for the six years of the contract, as well as improvements in health, accident and life insurance benefits.

*The Fresno Bee*



**Hospitality in Sacramento.** The Sheraton

Corp. will build a 500-room convention center hotel in downtown Sacramento, and already has signed a card-check agreement with the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees. More than 150 union members, including about 50 HERE members, packed hearing at which City Council members voted 8-0 for Sheraton over a competing bid from Marriott, which had refused a card check agreement.

## Labor Party Convention in November

The 1998 Labor Party convention will be held Nov. 13-15 in Pittsburgh, Pa. Members will receive a call to convention in February.

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## Local activists hold forum on Mexico

by Larry Langford, Labor/Community Alliance

More than 50 labor and community activists gathered at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence on Nov. 19 for the first in a series of **Global Fresno** forums on how international issues affect the people of the Central Valley. The first forum, "Mexico: What Happens There, Happens Here," focused on how the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has brought about an increase in political oppression in Mexico and led to the increasing militarization of its society.

Keynote speaker Peter Lumsdaine serves as the Latin America Program Coordinator at the Resource Center for Nonviolence, in Santa Cruz, Calif. His message was that the relationship between Mexico and the United States is especially important because it is the only place where the so-called Third World and First World share a geographic boundary. This relationship is complicated by American military and corporate power structures, which are playing an increasingly direct role in Mexican political and social life. The resulting instability could be catastrophic for the United States.

### **Freedom for transnational trade does not mean a corresponding freedom for workers.**

According to Lumsdaine, Mexico has become a crucial test case for the new global corporate society and for future free trade pacts modeled on NAFTA. The irony of such agreements is that while they guarantee open borders for trade and investment, they lead to heavily policed borders for people. Freedom for transnational trade does not mean a corresponding freedom for workers.

The implementation of economic austerity programs mandated by NAFTA has been catastrophic for Mexico, with the loss of over two million jobs. One of five families living in Mexico City cannot afford an adequate diet, resulting in a 900 percent increase in malnutrition.

Such economic hardships, said Lumsdaine, have been accompanied by a marked increase in political repression and in human rights violations by the Mexican armed forces. American weapons exports to Mexico have increased dramatically, from \$46 million in 1995 to over \$99 million in 1996. Since Mexico faces no external military threat, the only conclusion to be drawn is that these weapons will be used for internal security. Both the American and Mexican governments, he believes, want the option of a military solution to the spreading social unrest in that country. If such a scenario were to come to pass, American troops would then be conducting a large-scale counter-insurgency war in Mexico, one that almost certainly would spread across the border into the United States.

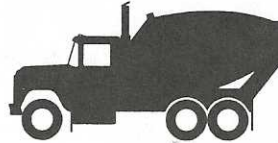
Nonetheless, Lumsdaine said he was very optimistic about the future of Mexico because of the strong movement there that specifically challenges the corporate, trans-national social

model dictated by NAFTA. People are organizing across the country, and what was especially heartening, he said, is the increasing cooperation between economic justice movements and those committed to ecological protections.

The first Global Fresno forum also included Gloria Hernandez of the Immigrant Women's Access Project, and labor leader Marcelo Salcido, both of whom spoke about the plight of immigrant workers.

## Fresno Teamsters on strike

by Jim Bishop, General Secretary-Treasurer, Teamsters Local 431



On Nov. 11, Teamsters Local 431 took economic strike action against four Ready Mix Companies in Fresno (American Transit Mix, CalMat, Stewart & Nuss and Builders). After one week, a settlement was reached with American Transit Mix with increases in health benefits, wages, pension, overtime, work guarantees and a three-year agreement. Stewart and Nuss offered a one-year agreement with increases in wages but take-aways in work week and no increase in health benefits. The union members will go back to work on an unconditional back-to-work agreement as of Dec. 17, with negotiations to continue.



You can help the striking Teamsters by contributing to their strike fund. Make checks payable to "Strike Fund" and send them to Teamsters Local 431, 1140 W. Olive Ave., Fresno, CA 93728.

Builders and CalMat took their final offer off the table that the members rejected and submitted a lesser offer that would take away seniority and take the members out of union pension and health and welfare plans. Their wage proposal was \$.50 per hour less and the health was \$75 per month less than American Transit Mix gave their employees over a three-year proposal.

The union struck Builders in 1991 for 11 weeks before returning to work under the threat of permanent replacement workers. **The company brought in outside strike breakers from Ohio immediately and started telling our members how to resign from the union so they could cross the picket lines without fines or retaliation.** This company is owned by a foreign company that has no respect for the American worker. They are out to break the union so they can send more American dollars to their foreign coffers.

Things look bleak at this point, but we are still fighting the battle. We need more community support and more solidarity from our union ranks to take on these big foreign corporations. We need to send a message that the American worker can't be pushed around by big corporations and insulted by foreign companies.



## Victory in Tijuana!

Ending months of struggle, including a hunger strike which had lasted nearly four weeks, on Dec. 16 workers at the Han Young factory in Tijuana, Mexico won official recognition of the union of their choice. The outcome hinged on a new union certification election—by secret ballot (highly unusual in Mexico). The vote was: 31 for STIMAHCS; 26 for the CTM, the government union hoping to enter the scene; two for the CROC, the previous government union at the factory.

In spite of firings, bribes and threats, the workers persisted in their demand for an independent union. Throughout this struggle, international solidarity played a crucial role in keeping the pressure on wherever needed.

The boycott of Hyundai Motors proved to be an especially effective part of solidarity activity. Han Young produces exclusively for Hyundai tractor-trailer factories in the Tijuana area. By putting pressure on the consumer division of Hyundai, activists were able to send shock waves through the conglomerate. There are indications that Hyundai management was demanding that Han Young find a resolution to the situation. It is likely that Hyundai's cash-flow problems stemming from the currency crisis in Korea made the company particularly vulnerable to consumer pressure.

Another instance of fortuitous timing was the debate over "fast track" during the Han Young crisis. Han Young became a poster child for the failure of NAFTA's labor side agreements to provide any protection for worker rights. In consultations with Mexican President Zedillo, President Clinton apparently raised Han Young as a problem case for U.S.-Mexican trade relations. During the final week before victory at Han Young, solidarity activists focused much of their pressure on Zedillo.

The Support Committee for Maquiladora Workers deserves great credit for its multiple roles in this struggle. Without it, there would not have been a victory.

## Bumper Stickers!

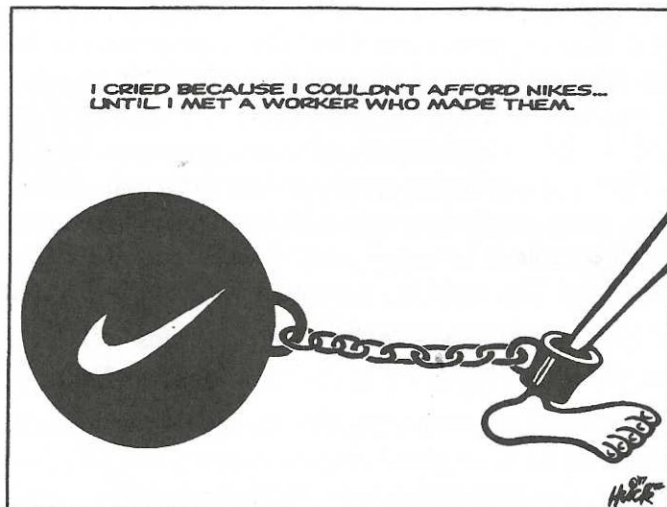
The boycott of Hyundai Motors will not be called off until a collective bargaining agreement is signed. However, the boycott demonstrations are on hold. The Support Committee for Maquiladora Workers is not asking local activists to leaflet at Hyundai dealerships at this time.

**"Boycott Hyundai" bumper stickers are available for \$1 each or \$6 for 10 from Labor/Community Alliance. Mail your check, along with \$2.50 for postage and handling, to: P.O. Box 5077, Fresno, CA 93755. For details on other bumper stickers, see the complete listing on the back of the calendar insert.**

## Holiday of conscience

### Nine greediest companies named

As part of Holiday of Conscience efforts to promote human rights and dignity for workers, Charles Kernaghan, Executive Director of the National Labor Committee (NLC), stood in front of a new Guess? store in New York City to announce the "greediest" sweatshop abusers of the season. The nine worst companies according to the NLC are Nike, Wal-Mart, Guess?, Walt Disney Co., Kmart, JCPenney, Esprit, Victoria's Secret and May's Department Stores.



During the Holiday of Conscience, shoppers were asked to speak to store managers where they shop about their concern as to whether the labor rights of the workers who made the products they purchased are respected. The National Labor Committee emphasizes that the Holiday of Conscience did not involve a boycott of any company but was an expression of citizen concern about human rights of workers and a protest against the abuses of the "greediest" companies.

For more information about "the greediest companies," including addresses where you can write the chief executive officers of the companies, check the NLC's website at [www.nlc.org](http://www.nlc.org) or write them at 275 Seventh Ave., 15th Floor, New York, NY 10001; Tel. (212) 242-3002

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## Kaiser's business plan

### Targeting the vulnerable

*California Nurses Association*

At a time when managed care and the consequences of business-oriented medicine are generating increasing media and legislative scrutiny from coast to coast, the CNA has initiated a series of reports on *Corporate Health Care: For-Profit, Not-for-Profit or Not for Patients*. The organization's goal is to place some of the most controversial issues in a broader scope while providing background about some of the health care industry's largest corporations. The first report focuses on Kaiser Permanente, the nation's largest HMO. The following is an excerpt from the report, which you can receive by calling the CNA at (415)864-4141. Check their website for up-to-the-minute developments: [www.califnurses.org](http://www.califnurses.org).

Kaiser's "business plan" is a market share strategy with a medical redlining program as its centerpiece. Its strategy includes selectively abandoning communities with population segments that present the potential for higher medical costs. Communities with significant population segments with the potential to increase Kaiser revenues (the relatively healthy and wealthy) are far less likely to be deserted.

**Kaiser is committed to closing its Oakland facility, is considering closing Sacramento, has refused to provide Richmond with a full-service emergency room (San Pablo residents also use the Richmond facility), and wants to close Martinez. Why? Consider these statistics:**

- ☛ Nearly 18% of the population of **Oakland** receives some form of public assistance, and over 30% of related children under 18 live in poverty. Thirteen percent of all households earn less than \$10,000 a year. Eleven percent of those over 65 are in poverty.
- ☛ In **Richmond**, the number of related children under 18 in poverty is about 26% while over 11% of all households bring in less than \$10,000 per year.
- ☛ In **Martinez**, the Black per capita income is extremely low—a little over \$9,000 per year, even less than the \$10,940 Black per capita for Oakland.
- ☛ Twelve percent of **Sacramento** households bring in less than \$10,000 per year, and the number of households receiving public assistance is about 16%. Sixteen percent are of Latino origin.
- ☛ Twenty-seven percent of the **San Pablo** population is of Latino origin. More than 13% of all households earn less than \$10,000 per year, and the per capita for Asian or Pacific Islanders is about \$9,500. The White per capita is only \$11,400. Of the 10.7% that are 65 and over, 11% are in poverty. More than 27% of related children under 18 are in poverty.

Medicare patients in the targeted communities will be especially hard hit. Over half of Richmond's 1995 discharges were Medicare patients (55.7%). Oakland had about 27% and Sacramento about 33%. Kaiser is willing to desert these Medicare populations because the less wealthy Medicare populations tend to be less healthy, and less healthy Medicare patients tend to need more costly care.

## Nicaraguan workers suffer to enrich multinationals

*National Labor Committee*



Kmart announced to the press in mid-November that the minimum wage in Nicaragua was 15¢ an hour—and that their company meets that! J.C. Penney spokesman Duncan Muir explained to the press how they went about their sourcing in Nicaragua: "We don't set standards on working hours . . . We don't dictate to them how they go out

and do business." However, one thing is clear: "It's not fair to compare wages in undeveloped countries to here." Maquila workers at these companies and Wal-Mart, most of them young women, work shifts of 12 hours per day or more at factories in the free trade zone

Even if we go beyond Kmart in meeting the 15¢ an hour minimum wage and assume that most workers take home a fully-loaded (bonuses, overtime rates, incentives included) wage of 31¢ an hour, how well do they survive? Some of the workers' weekly expenses would include:

✓ R/T bus fare to work six days a week	\$2.45
✓ "Breakfast" consisting of coffee or juice	.92
✓ Lunch (rice and beans, a little cheese, a scrap of meat and a local soft drink)	6.73
✓ Rent (two families sharing a one-room hut)	3.53
✓ Water (one faucet)	1.41
✓ Electricity	1.77
✓ Wood (for cooking on outdoor stove)	1.88
✓ Powdered milk (two boxes, enough to last two infants one week)	4.08

If we stop here, we are already up to **\$22.41** for basic weekly expenses. And we still haven't purchased food for our family, or clothing to wear to work, not to mention child care, medical care and school expenses. At the average wage of 31¢ an hour, you take home only **\$17.31** per week!

To find out what you can do to speak out against this injustice, contact the NLC at (212)242-3002 or visit their website: [www.nlcnet.org](http://www.nlcnet.org).

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Union/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

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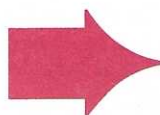
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# Calendar of Events January 1998

## Urgent

### Protest the Chiapas massacre!

**Speak out for human rights on Friday,  
January 2, at noon at the Mexican  
Consulate, 830 Van Ness (near Kern).**

#### Saturday, January 10

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

*Fresno Center for Nonviolence Annual Board Retreat*, 1 P.M.

#### Tuesday, January 13

*Second Tuesday*, 6:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Meets every second Tuesday to discuss what it means to have a personal commitment to nonviolence. Meal at 6:30; discussion at 7:30. Call 237-3225.

#### Tuesday, January 13

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

#### Thursday, January 15

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

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

#### Friday, January 16

Deadline to register for *Nuts-n-Bolts of Fundraising and Campaigning* (see January 27/February 3).

#### Saturday, January 17

*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, January 19

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

#### Tuesday, January 20

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

#### Thursday, January 22

*Sacramento Janitors' March*, noon, downtown Sacramento; see story on page 4.

#### Sunday, January 25

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

#### Monday, January 26

*Labor Party, Frank Little Chapter*, 5:30 P.M., Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Everyone welcome. Call 226-2078.

#### Tuesday, January 27

*Nuts-n-Bolts of Fundraising and Campaigning*, 5:30 P.M., Fresno County Clerk/Elections Office, 2221 Kern Street. Information on candidate filing, voter registration, absentee voting, resources available. Registration by Jan. 16 required; fax name, organization, address, phone to 488-3279, or register at the office.

#### Wednesday, January 28

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



## Upcoming Events

#### Tuesday, February 3

*Nuts-n-Bolts of Fundraising and Campaigning*, 5:30 P.M., Fresno County Clerk/Elections Office, 2221 Kern Street. Fair Political Practices Commission discusses rules, regulations and financial reporting; Prop. 208. Registration by Jan. 16 required; fax name, organization, address, phone to 488-3279, or register at the office.

## CELEBRATING

### DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

#### Friday, January 16

*Garlanding Ceremony*, noon, Fresno County Courthouse statue. Please bring flowers and a can of food.

#### Saturday, January 17

*All Faith and Music Service Breakfast*, 8:30 A.M., Ted C. Wills Community Center, 770 N. San Pablo; \$5. Call 237-5212. Please bring a can of food.

#### Sunday, January 18

*Candlelight Vigil*, 5 P.M., Fresno City Hall fountain area. Call 237-5212. Please bring a can of food.

#### Monday, January 19

*Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. March and Program*, assemble at City Hall at 11:30 A.M. to march to the Saroyan Theatre. Program begins at 1 P.M. at the Saroyan and features speakers and performers from throughout Fresno. Please bring a can of food. Food donations go to the Francis X. Singleton Emergency Food Assistance Program. Call 237-5212.

*Reception at African American Museum*, 3-5 P.M., 1867 Fulton Street.



## Book Review

### **The Labour Movement and the Internet: The New Internationalism**, by Eric Lee

*Review by Mike Rhodes*

This book gives a great background on the labor movement's use of the Internet. I was interested because the Campaign for Labor Rights (CLR) steering committee, of which I am a member, has made extensive use of the Internet. We have set up a web site, an e-mail alert network, and communicate almost exclusively by e-mail. Before I read this book I knew little about the history of organized labor's use of the Internet.

Not only does Lee's book give the history of labor's use of the Internet, but he has an optimism about the future which we can all benefit from. He sees the opportunity for a "New Internationalism" developing because of this new technology. If labor can grab hold of this technology we can build cross-border solidarity like we have never known before.

Much of the book focuses on concrete examples of how the labor movement uses the Internet to build a stronger and more democratic union. It is only with this technology that some things are made possible. For example, as corporations have become even more transnational there has developed a corresponding need for labor to respond internationally. You can't organize a company in one country if that company will shut down and move to another (unorganized and more repressive) country. Workers of the world need to have the means to communicate with each other, compare notes and show solidarity. It has been prohibitively expensive to get workers in different countries to meet regularly and plan a strategy to confront multinational corporations. With the Internet, workers can communicate frequently and inexpensively. There has never been a time like the present for workers to use technology to confront multinational corporations.

The labor movement is just starting to understand the potential of this technology. In Lee's book, we also learn about the International Labour University; an online international daily labor press; an online archive, discussion group and journal; and an Emergency Response Network. I hope you will take the time to read the book. It is well worth the effort.

**Health Care for All petitions** should be sent to Bill Young as soon as possible. Despite the fact that there is a deadline of December 31 printed on them, there is no firm deadline as they will be used during the next session of the California Legislature. If you receive this newsletter as part of the Fresno Center for Nonviolence mailing, a copy of the petition, which asks legislators to sponsor legislation for universal health care, is enclosed. For more information, call Bill at 855-2438.

## More Labor News

**Eisner makes \$565 million in stock options.** In the single biggest payday for an executive in history, Walt Disney Chairman Michael Eisner on Dec. 3 exercised stock options at a profit of about \$565 million that he had accumulated as head of the entertainment giant. The pretax payout is his second gigantic one in the past five years. (*Los Angeles Times*) Compare and contrast: Disney contractors pay Haitian workers 11¢ an hour. It's enough to make a decent person grumpy.

**Workers lose when unions lose.** The average wage of working people in America today is less than the average wage 32 years ago. According to data published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average hourly wage of production workers in the United States, as of June 1996, is \$11.81. Allowing for inflation, this is a little less than what the average worker earned in 1965.

While the average worker lost ground, union members, because of their collective strength, were able to make real improvements in wages. In 1996, the average unionized worker earned \$14.48 an hour, while non-union workers averaged \$11.45 an hour. This is for workers in all non-agricultural private industries.

Unions are absolutely necessary for working people in America. Only by organizing and joining unions can workers have the power to protect and improve their conditions.

*Voice of the ILWU, Honolulu*

The following bumper stickers and buttons are available from Labor/Community Alliance

### **Bumper Stickers**

I love my Union  
When you're attacked globally You'd better act globally  
This vehicle brakes for picket lines  
The Labor Movement . . . The folks who brought you the weekend Organize!  
Labor is back  
Friends don't let friends cross picket lines  
It takes a single sweatshop to steal a childhood  
Unions: The anti-theft device for working people  
Union fighter, Union voter  
Boycott Hyundai  
Flush Rush

### **Buttons**

No Company Unions!  
Solidaridad Pa Siempre  
Don't Whine, Organize!  
What part of Good Faith don't you understand?  
Make solidarity our official language.  
Bosses Beware: When we're screwed, we multiply.  
Unions: The anti-theft device for working people  
Unions: The folks who brought you the weekend  
All bumper stickers and buttons are \$1 each plus \$2.50 shipping and handling per order. Inquire about discount on wholesale orders. Order from: Labor/Community Alliance, P.O. Box 5077, Fresno, CA 93755, (209)226-0477, [clr2@igc.apc.org](mailto:clr2@igc.apc.org)