

# Labor/Community ALLIANCE

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VOLUME 5, ISSUE 3



MARCH 2000

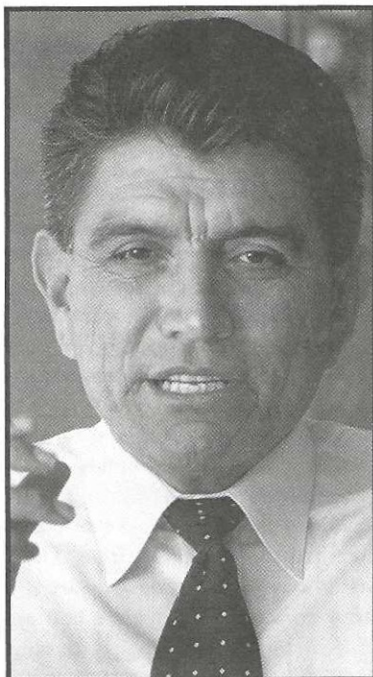
## ELECTION 2000

by: Mike Rhodes

How are you going to vote on March 7? The Labor/Community Alliance asked several respected members of Fresno's progressive community which candidates and propositions they recommended people to vote for and why. We also co-sponsored a series of candidate forums in February to get a better idea of how the candidates stood on important issues. As the candidates talked at the forums and responses came back from our readers it became clear who our favorites will be in this election.

It would be easy to give our readers a simple list of the candidates to vote for, but it might be more interesting to know why people are voting for a particular candidate. For example, Ellie Bluestein a prominent member of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom said she has "definitely decided to vote for Dan Ronquillo. He has clearly shown his commitment to preserving downtown Fresno as a viable city center and he is most open to appreciating the diverse groups in Fresno and making them part of the decision making and functioning agencies of our city. He is decisive and direct, does not equivocate or hedge when asked a direct question, is not afraid to state his positions, does not seem to be bought and paid for by any power elite (but who can really tell? I guess I just have to take a chance)."

The Rev. Bryan D. Jessup, minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church, is also supporting Dan Ronquillo. "I'm going to vote for Dan Ronquillo for Mayor. He's a hard worker on the City Council.



*The Labor/Community Alliance is endorsing Dan Ronquillo for Mayor of Fresno.*

He's bright and has a great ability to envision programs and projects and keep track of details. He is committed to revitalizing downtown. He's committed to pluralism - a member of the Interfaith Alliance and very involved in MLK Day events and efforts for minorities and working people."

The Fresno County Green Party (see article on page 11) is not endorsing any candidate for mayor. They "lean towards Dan Ronquillo for his progressive policies, but could not reach consensus."

Howard Watkins, local attorney and long time community activist, has a different candidate he supports. "As to the Mayor's race, several of the candidates would be good. However, we only get to vote for one in the primary. It is unfortunate that Chris Petersen had to withdraw from the race, as he would have brought a strong grassroots approach to the election. While many of the candidates support my key issues of strengthening the Downtown (including building the new stadium), controlling urban sprawl, creating job growth opportunities, working with at-risk youth, etc., I am recommending Dan Whitehurst. I consider him to be the best at working with the diverse business, political, and ethnic groups in our community. He also has the political and communication skills to be the effective leader Fresno needs. There are issues in the past and I expect in the future with which I will disagree with Dan. In the big picture though, I view him as the best for the job as Mayor of Fresno."

The Labor/Community Alliance evaluated the candidates for mayor of Fresno at the Responsible Choices candidate forum held on February 10. Before this event the Labor/Community Alliance had made no decision about endorsements. But one candidate stood out from the rest as a strong supporter of working class and progressive issues.

All eight candidates for mayor showed up. There was



*Dan Rosenberg has progressive politics and is running against George Radanovich in the 19th Congressional District*

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Ever since its inception, I have been a supporter of L/CA and appreciate the newsletter. However, I am disturbed that your notion of community inclusiveness does not extend to members of the disability community. We are here. We are active. We are trying to make Fresno a barrier free community for all Fresnoans with disabilities, visible and invisible, sensory and cognitive, etc. It's time we were recognized.

Ed Eames, Chair  
Fresno Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Council  
Fresno Area Express ADA Advisory Committee

\*\*\*\*\*

For several months I've been receiving from you your monthly newsletter. I believe the subscription was initiated on my behalf by Death Penalty Focus.

I write you to simply convey my thanks and appreciation for all the information and issues you've covered during the time I've been receiving the newsletter. I'm incarcerated in Coalinga California and the newsletter has provided me with an insight into the Fresno and Central Valley area that I might not have otherwise had.

I'm not certain when my subscription is due to expire but I merely wanted you to know that I think the newsletter is a

fascinating and effective organ of the Labor and Activist community and I think you guys are doing one heck of a job! I'm in no position to donate monies but do extend to you my sincerest solidarity and support.

M. Jennings  
Pleasant Valley State Prison

*(Editors note: Last year one of our supporters made a generous contribution and designated that it be used for a prisoner subscription. We will send the newsletter free to any prisoner wishing to be on our mailing list)*

### LABOR/COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

*The Labor/Community Alliance is independent and dedicated to building a coalition of organized labor and progressive community groups to pursue economic and social justice for working people in Fresno and the Central San Joaquin Valley. The Labor/Community Alliance is affiliated nationally with Jobs with Justice. This newsletter is published monthly.*

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## LEGALIZE THE NEEDLE EXCHANGE PROJECT NOW

By: *Patience Milrod*

Somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000 intravenous drug users live in Fresno County. Many are solid members of the middle class, working across the entire spectrum of businesses and professions; many are uneducated, mentally ill, homeless. And every one of them needs a clean needle for every injection.

But in California you can only get a clean needle legally if you have a prescription, or if you live in a county whose Board of Supervisors has declared a state of emergency in order to permit exchange of clean syringes for used ones. Fresno County's Board of Supervisors will soon be considering adopting such a provision here. But is there an emergency?

Members of the San Joaquin Valley Exchange Works believe so. So does every public health officer of every county in the state except Fresno. So do emergency room and family practice doctors, who see the painful, expensive and often fatal results of keeping clean needles out of the hands of intravenous drug users.

Over the past ten years, epidemiologists have studied and re-studied what happens when intravenous drug users re-use, and share, needles. They've consistently come to one conclusion: shared needles spread HIV infection and hepatitis C, and lead to

infection of the sex partners and the unborn children of infected drug users. Re-use of needles results in lesions, abscesses and other opportunistic infections. The cost in public health dollars to treat these infections and illnesses is staggering. The cost of a single clean needle is eight cents.

But in communities where there exists a system for receiving used needles and providing clean needles in exchange, we see a reduction in these harms and a significantly reduced burden on the public health system. A study conducted in 1997 and published in the British medical journal *The Lancet*, found that in 29 cities worldwide where programs are in place, HIV infection dropped by an average of 5.8 percent a year among drug users. In 51 cities that had no needle-exchange programs, drug-related infection rose by

5.9 percent a year.

"Just say no" is not an option for the drug-dependent addict. Nor is sending addicts to treatment a realistic alternative here: there are

approximately 90 detox beds in all of Fresno County, to serve both intravenous drug users and the approximately 15,000 alcoholics who also live here. When users seek treatment, they must wait weeks and months before a bed is available. During those weeks and months, if they don't have access to clean needles, they'll continue to use, re-use and share such needles as they can find.

In the spring of 1998, Jean Rodriguez, Audrey Alorro and Bobby Bowen were arrested for taking to the streets their belief that until this society adequately funds detox and addiction treatment services, clean needles are the only way to protect the health of

*(Continued on page 7)*

**IN THE U.S., IT IS ESTIMATED THAT OVER 80% OF INJECTION DRUG USERS HAVE HEPATITIS C**

# MARCH IS WOMEN'S HERSTORY MONTH

By: Diane Scott

The AMERICAN HERITAGE dictionary defines herstory as: the experiences and accomplishments of women, especially as seen in an historical context. It is a month dedicated to acknowledging the feminine contributions in the evolution of humankind, in pointing out how far we've come in the quest for equality, and how far we have yet to go to achieve it.

There are a number of events scheduled here in Fresno this month. The Fresno City College Women's Studies Program will have a series of presentations on campus. On March 9 a panel discussion on Violence Against Women will be held at 12:30 in the Health Science Building, room 100. (A campus map can be found on page 13 Blue Pages of the Fresno Telephone Directory) Dance and Music groups are planned for March 8. A History of Women Artists is scheduled for March 13. (Call 442-4600 x8351 for information on the definite date, time, and place.) A presentation by the Consumer Credit Counseling organization will be March 22 at 10:00 a.m. in the Social Sciences Building room 208 and the school is working on getting a speaker for the topic of International Sweat Shops. This will probably be on March 29.

The Women's Resource Center at CSUF will show a series of four videos, beginning March 2 at 3:30 at the Resource Center on campus. (A map is on page 15 Blue pages Fresno Telephone Directory) The videos are "A Century of Women," a documentary in three sections, Social Justice, Work and Family, and The Arts.

There is also an ongoing discussion group which meets Tuesdays from 12-12:50. Contact Jennifer at the Resource Center, 278-4435, for more information on Women's Alliance meetings.

There will be a Gathering of Women March 25 from 10:00-5:00 at the Convention Center Exhibit Hall. 30 different groups will have booths at the gathering: hospitals and clinics, businesses, non-profits, Women's Political Caucus, Planned Parenthood, Sequoia Community Health, Cancer, Buddy Check (KSEE channel 24), San Joachim Valley College, Western Pacific Trucking, Pacific Martial Arts, Babies First, EOC, The Sanctuary, Career Development, Youth Outreach, Marjaree Mason Center, Healing for Survivors, Fresno Center for Nonviolence, Rape Counseling, National Organization for Women, Camping Women, St. Agnes Physical Therapy, Adult Day Care, and others.

At the beginning of this new millennium, and especially in the last hundred years, women have gained much ground. We can keep our own wages (even though they are still only 3/4 of a man's), we can keep our own property when married, we can request and obtain custody of our own children, we can VOTE and be elected to political office. Female children of all colors have equal rights in education and sports, we have the right to the integrity of our own bodies, almost if not all professions are open to us but there are still too many areas where we are not equal. And there are those who work to take away what we have gained. We must continue to fight for complete equality.

Diane Scott, Unitarian Universalist Church Representative to L/CA



## Planned Parenthood Mar Monte Central California Region

### REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE SERVICES

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- ◆ Annual exams
- ◆ Breast, cervical & testicular cancer screening
- ◆ Pregnancy testing & counseling
- ◆ Prenatal care

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- ◆ Immunizations
- ◆ Pediatrics

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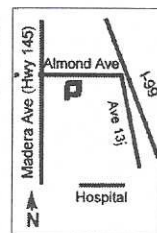
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LOW OR NO COST SERVICES

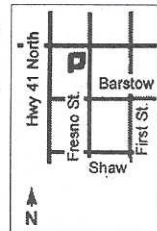
MEDI-CAL WELCOME

DAY AND EVENING HOURS

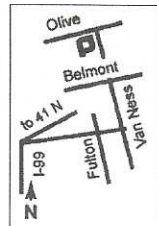
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500 E. Almond, #3  
(559) 675-1133



**Family First**  
5727 N. Fresno St. #101  
(559) 446-1515



**Van Ness**  
633 N. Van Ness  
(559) 488-4900



# Valley Labor Chatter

## WORKERS WIN SETTLEMENT, BUT FACE DEPORTATION

Nine undocumented Mexican workers fired from their jobs at a Minneapolis Holiday Inn Express after they voted to join Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees Local 17 last year--who then were turned in to the Immigration and Naturalization Service by management--were awarded \$72,000 in a settlement. The hotel agreed to the settlement after the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission charged the workers had been discriminated against. But the nine still face deportation, and Local 17 has started a petition and letter-writing campaign to convince U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno to allow the workers and their families to remain and work in the United States. For more information and sample letters and petitions, contact Kate Shaughnessy at Local 17: 612-379-4730, ext. 28; or Bill Moore at the Minnesota AFL-CIO: 651-227-7647.

## FRESNO HOME CARE WORKERS GET ORGANIZED

A campaign to organize Home Care workers in Fresno kicked off Thursday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, with great success! There was big support from Home Care Workers and advocates. "We need a voice, better wages and benefits," said Patricia Oliver, a home care worker. "We want to join with the 75,000 home care workers of Los Angeles who have recently won their election. The support of home care workers, seniors, consumers and advocates is needed in order for this to happen." There is a real need for a union in this profession. For more information call Iley Whiting or Mariana Durazo at Service Employees International Union (SEIU) at (559) 277-4372.

## BIGGEST UNION GROWTH IN DECADES

Union membership rose by more than 265,000 in 1999--the largest annual increase in 20 years, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported Jan. 19. The number of union members in the United States rose from 16.21 million to 16.48 million last year, the report said, and the percentage of U.S. workers who belong to unions remained steady at 13.9 percent. That percentage had been going down in recent years. Because unions have committed greater energy and resources to helping workers gain a voice at work, much of the membership growth was due to an increase in the number of workers forming unions. At least 600,000 workers organized into unions in 1999, according to internal AFL-CIO and affiliate union data--an increase of more than 25 percent over 1998. "We've gotten this train rolling and picking up

speed, but we're not at our destination yet," AFL-CIO President John Sweeney told reporters at a news briefing. Significantly, the percentage of private-sector workers in unions remained steady, ending a 20-year decline. Some unions had their best organizing year in recent history. For instance, nearly 50,000 workers each joined the UAW and the Electrical Workers, and more than 150,000 joined SEIU.

## ORGANIZED LABOR SUFFERS SETBACK IN CITY COUNCIL VOTE

Fresno unions suffered a setback last month when the Fresno City Council voted against having municipal jobs with project labor agreements. In front of a full house of union supporters, council member Ken Steitz introduced the bill that will weaken the labor movement and open the door for using non-union labor on city construction projects. Steitz was joined by Garry Bredefeld, Chris Mathys, and Henry Perea in passing this anti-union ordinance. Several union activists complained that Perea had been supported by organized labor and had been expected to vote against this legislation.

Mike Rhodes, editor of the Labor/Community Alliance newsletter, said that "this vote is evidence of the need for organized labor and the progressive community to work more closely together to defend the interests of working people. Perhaps if the Union members had been joined by religious leaders and activists from the peace and social justice community the vote might have been different." The Labor/Community Alliance will continue looking for ways that organized labor and the progressive community can work together.

## AFL-CIO CALLS FOR AMNESTY FOR ILLEGAL U.S. WORKERS

Claiming U.S. immigration policy is "broken and needs to be fixed," the AFL-CIO has called for a new amnesty for millions of undocumented workers and the repeal of the 1986 law that criminalized hiring them. The position, adopted unanimously by the federation's executive council at its winter meeting in New Orleans, represents a dramatic shift for the AFL-CIO, which backed the so-called employer sanctions law 15 years ago. At the time, immigrants were viewed by many labor activists as competitors for jobs or potential strikebreakers. The demographics of the U.S. work force are very different now, with foreign-born workers dominating many industries and accounting for a large share of new union members.



Home Health Care workers want a Union.

# HOWARD'S HOPEFULS

by: Howard Watkins

Howard Watkins is a local attorney and long time community activist. These are his recommendations for the 3/7/00 elections.

- PRESIDENT ..... GORE
- CONG. #18 ..... CONDIT
- CONG. #19 ..... ROSENBERG
- CONG. #20 ..... DOOLEY
- U.S. SEN. .... FEINSTEIN
- ST. ASSEM #25 ..... MORALES
- ST. ASSEM #29 ..... REID
- ST. ASSEM #30 ..... FLOREZ
- ST. ASSEM #31 ..... REYES
- SUP. CT. #3 ..... ALLEN-HILL
- SUP. CT. #10 ..... YORK
- COF SUP. #2 ..... ANDERSON
- COF SUP. #3 ..... ARAMBULA
- COF SUP. #5 ..... WATERSTON
- MAYOR ..... WHITEHURST
- CITY COUNCIL #2 ..... CALANDRA
- CITY COUNCIL #4 ..... BROWN
- CITY COUNCIL #6 ..... WOODY
- FRESNO MEASURE A ..... YES
- KINGS RIVER #2 ..... NIELSEN

# GAIA HOUSE ACTIVITIES IN MARCH

The Gaia House was established in January of 1999 to provide a home with care-providers for a man with cerebral palsy and be a center for community-based activities. The home has had some remodeling done to it to make it more accessible for the owner as it will always be a disabled person's residence. Gaia House strives to be a positive force in the community by being a place of information gathering, encouraging healthier ways of living (supporting vegetarianism, organic foods, gardening, etc.), expressing ideas through art and action, and providing activities for all members of the community to enjoy.

From now until March 31st, there is a concerted effort at Gaia House to complete several projects that benefit the community. These projects include a Wheelchair Accessible Garden, cleaning up and beautifying a neighborhood alley, organizing the Bike workshop, planting an organic garden, painting murals, and organizing an alternative library and resource center in the living room of the house. These projects are to be completed on the weekends throughout the month of March. Other ongoing house activities include a Food Not Bombs meal to the hungry at Roeding Park every Sunday (cook @ 10am, serve from 1-2pm) and a cultural coffeeshouse/open mike every fourth Saturday. If you wish to participate or want further information feel free to call us at 266-5305.



# LOCKDOWN AMERICA

Christian Parenti, the author of LOCKDOWN AMERICA will be in Fresno the end of March. Mr. Parenti teaches at the New College of California in San Francisco. He has worked as a radio journalist in Central America, New York and California, and his writing has appeared in The Nation (a story about the Fresno Police SWAT program: the Violence Control Suppression Unit), The Progressive, In These Times, The Baffler, and The Christian Science Monitor.

The book: LOCKDOWN AMERICA: Police and Prison in the Age of Crisis, copyright 1999 by Verso Press. Over a third of the book concerns policing and prisons in California.

Here is what reviewers have to say:

"The book that police, politicians and prison officials don't want you to see. Read it now."

*Amy Goodman, Democracy Now*

"The U.S. likes to think of itself as a model democracy, but it jails more people and criminalizes more behavior than any country outside the former USSR. Christian Parenti compellingly examines all the hows and whys behind this horrific fact. Important stuff, very well done."

*Doug Henwood, author of Wall Street: How it works and for Whom*

"Extensively footnoted, well researched and written in an easy to understand, flowing style, LOCKDOWN AMERICA gives a detailed, comprehensive look at how police and prisons keep the poor in line while maintaining the economic and political status quo. The radical, class based analysis sets it apart from, and above, similar works."

*Paul Wright in Prison Legal News*

# CHRISTIAN PARENTI/ LOCKDOWN AMERICA

Saturday, 3/25/2000, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.  
Phoebe Wall Howard Radio Program  
(KMPH 107.5FM and KTRB 860AM)

Sunday, 3/26/2000 at 3 p.m.  
Christian will do a presentation at Barnes & Noble Bookstore  
on Shaw at Blackstone.

Sunday, 3/26/2000, at 7 p.m.  
Talk & Q&A Sponsored by the Fresno Center for  
Non-Violence at the Unitarian-Universalist Church in Fresno,  
4144 North Millbrook

Monday, 3/27/2000, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.  
Talk and Q&A Sponsored by the Fresno State University  
Sociology Department in Room 101 of the Industrial Tech  
Building on Barstow,  
1 block East of Cedar on the CSUF Campus

# Calendar of Events March 2000

## Wednesday, March 1

7 PM

SAY WHAT??!! SPEAKER Derrel Myers will talk about Proposition 21. The event will be held at Wesley Methodist Church, 1343 E. Barstow (corner of 4th and Barstow). Sponsored by Gaia House, Food not Bombs, Fresno Center for Nonviolence, WILPF, and the Harm Reduction Task Force. Call 445-9111 for more information.

## Saturday, March 4

10:00 AM

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is holding their monthly meeting at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness. Call 229-9807 for more information. All welcome.

## Tuesday, March 7

Primary Elections. Don't forget to vote.

## Wednesday, March 8

International Women's Day.

## Thursday, March 9

6:00 PM

METHYL BROMIDE REGULATIONS & PUBLIC HEARINGS. There will only be four hearings in the whole state on these new standards, and one of them will be here in the Central Valley. The hearing will held at the University of California Kearney Agricultural Center, 9240 S. Riverbend Avenue, in Parlier. Call Pesticide Watch for more information: (800) 401-6510.

## Saturday, March 11

9:30 AM

Fresno Center for Nonviolence monthly board meeting, 985 N Van Ness. All welcome.

## Tuesday, March 14

Vegetarian potluck begins at 6:30 PM and the program starts at 7:30 PM

Second Tuesday at the Fresno Center For Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness. Committee member Ed Wade will give a presentation on the "EMPTY BOWLS" project. Call 439-8140 for more information.

## Wednesday, March 15

Deadline for submissions to the April issue of the Labor Community Alliance newsletter.

## Thursday, March 16

7:30 PM

Death Penalty Focus meeting at the center for nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness

## Thursday, March 16

6 PM

MAPA del Valle general meeting at Arte Americas, 1630 Van Ness Ave. For more information call 485-4707 or 252-3330.

## Monday, March 20

Potluck at 6 PM and program at 7 PM

Pastors for Peace Caravan to Chiapas will be in Fresno. The Fresno Center for Nonviolence will host a potluck and program. Call 227-2133 for more information

## Friday, March 24

5 - 6 PM

Street Heat on KFCF 88.1 FM featuring Labor and Community activists.

## Saturday, March 25

3 PM

The film, YES IN MY BACKYARD, an even-handed examination of a farming community turned prison town in upstate New York, will be shown at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness. The screening will be followed by a discussion and conversation featuring the filmmaker, Tracy Huling.

## Sunday, March 26

Noon - 5 PM

Viva el Mariachi! Festival featuring Las Hermanas Huerta con el Mariachi Mexico de Pepe Villa, Nai Cano y Mariachi Los Camperos. For more information call Radio Bilingue at 455-5777.

## Sunday, March 26

7 PM

"LOCKDOWN AMERICA" Christian Parenti, author of the recent book, Lockdown America, will speak about prisons in America. Talk & Q&A Sponsored by the Fresno Center for Non-Violence at the Unitarian-Universalist Church in Fresno, 4144 North Millbrook

## Monday, March 27

Christian Parenti, author of the recent book, LOCKDOWN AMERICA, will speak about prisons in America at CSUF. The presentation will take place in Industrial Technology 101 (corner of Barstow and Campus Drive). This lecture is free and open to the public.

## Wednesday, March 29

12:30 PM

Demonstration to protest The Gap's use of sweatshop labor. Meet at the main entrance to the Fashion Fair mall. Medea Benjamin, director of Global Exchange, and Carmencita "Chie" Abad, who worked for 6 years in a Gap sweatshop in Saipan, will join the demonstration. Call 226-0477 for more information.

## Wednesday, March 29

7 PM

Medea Benjamin and Carmencita "Chie" Abad from Global Exchange will talk about Corporate Accountability and Sweatshops in Saipan at the First Congregational Church on Van Ness and Yale, near Fresno high School. For more information call 229-9807.

*For up to the minute information about what is happening in Fresno's progressive community join the Labor/Community Alliance email alert network. We send out an updated calendar of events once a week and alert you when there is an emergency rally or demonstration. This is a free service. You can join by sending your email address to <clr2@igc.org> and saying you would like to subscribe to this service.*

April 22 - Earth Day

April 28

Women's International League  
for Peace and Freedom  
85 anniversary celebration

(Continued from page 2)

users and of the community as a whole. Their arrests came after the San Joaquin Valley Exchange Works had been operating undisturbed for approximately four years--providing clean needles in exchange for users' dirty needles, and safely disposing of the used needles. Jean's arrest occurred when a citizen reported what appeared to be a drug deal: the police did not have the option to ignore the legal violation once they arrived. Audrey and Bobby were arrested, we've been told, when a member of the Fresno City Council complained to the chief of police about needle exchange activity in Roeding Park.



Fresno County's District Attorney, Ed Hunt, has taken the position that he has no choice but to prosecute. And at the time of the arrests, he was right. Fresno County, unlike several other counties in the state, had at that time not recognized the public health emergency created by the spread of HIV and other diseases through shared needles.

Our Board of Supervisors has still not addressed the issue, but as of late 1999 California law provides a green light for action: "No public entity, its agents, or employees shall be subject to criminal prosecution for distribution of hypodermic needles or syringes to participants in clean needle and syringe exchange projects authorized by the public entity pursuant to a declaration of a local emergency due to the existence of a critical local public health crisis."

In Fresno County, the proportion of new HIV infections arising from intravenous drug use is now substantially greater than any other single cause, and continues to rise. The Board of Supervisors will soon have an opportunity to consider the scientific evidence, the opinions of the Fresno-Madera Medical Society, the experiences of local doctors and statewide public health officers. The Board must weigh the costs of avoidable human suffering and the drain on public health resources against the eight-cent needle.

If you know a member of the Board of Supervisors, ask him or her about needle exchange. Remind your Board member that the credible scientific evidence is unanimous that providing clean needles stops the spread of infection, and does not induce people to use or continue to use drugs. Addicts will use anyway--the question is whether they will also become infected or infect others, and what that will cost the rest of us in the community.

## YES IN MY BACKYARD: ARE PRISONS REALLY HELPING RURAL CALIFORNIA?

Over the last two decades, rural towns across California and particularly in the Central Valley have seen a new industry spring up: prisons. Towns which 3 or 4 decades ago would have taken a strong "Not In My Back Yard" attitude towards prison construction have lobbied to get the hundreds of millions of dollars in construction and payroll to prop up their depressed economies.

But as Mike Lewis's January 9 article in the Fresno Bee points out, prison construction has not provided the economic benefits that the towns had hoped for.

It wasn't supposed to be like this, 800 people lined up in the rain outside John Muir Junior High School in Corcoran for a shot at two low-wage clerical jobs in the local prison.

Everyone, from cops and city officials to restaurant owners and lawmakers, says they thought the two prisons in the Kings County town would ease chronic double digit unemployment and a lack of middle class wages in small Valley towns. Financial experts said so. Local boosters took the projections and ran with them.

They saw prisons, once pariahs, as economic saviors.  
The prisons arrived.  
Salvation hasn't.

YES IN MY BACKYARD, an even-handed examination of a farming community turned prison town in upstate New York, will be shown on Saturday, March 25 at 3 PM at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness. The screening will be followed by a discussion and conversation featuring the filmmaker, Tracy Huling along with Ruth Wilson Gilmore professor of geography at UC Berkeley and author of the upcoming book on California's prison system Golden Gulags and activists from Lindsay and Farmersville.

For more information contact Richard Stone at 266- 2559.

**film screening and discussion:  
YES IN MY BACKYARD : Are Prisons Really Helping Rural California?**

**Saturday March 25  
3:00-5:30**

**Fresno Center for Non-Violence  
985 N. Van Ness  
(2 1/2 blocks south of Olive)**



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# FRESNO CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE

**CHRISTIAN PARENTI:** The author of Lockdown America will be in Fresno the end of March. We are sponsoring a program with Mr. Parenti on Sunday March 26 at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N Millbrook at 7:00 p.m. Please join us for this important presentation on the state of "law and order" in the U.S.



## THE WELCH REPORT

Feb. 14, 2000

Jack H. Welch, M.D.

**SECOND TUESDAY:** (March 14): Ray Ensher is hosting a conversation with Ed Wade of the planning committee for Fresno's Empty Bowls fundraiser for the hungry. We will be talking about the history and significance of that annual event.

**EARTH DAY:** An ad hoc committee has been meeting at the Center to plan an Earth Day program to carry forth the spirit of "The Battle in Seattle". If you're interested in participating, dates of planning meetings are posted on the Center's phone line (press \*3 after the message begins) or leave your name and number and you will be contacted.

**PROJECT REPORTS:** Wheelchair Project--Patrick Young is planning another run to Chiapas in June, emphasizing educational materials. Central California Institute--Vincent Lavery & Jackie Elliot report excellent response to their solicitation of "fellows" for our progressive think tank; they are now in process of contacting potential media outlets. Peace Challenge--5 projects are underway, with plans being made for a student conference and public awards ceremony.

**PEACE CENTERS CONFERENCE:** The annual gathering of "the tribes" from around Northern California will be held in Stockton on March 18-19. It is always an informative and re-invigorating occasion. Several of us will be car-pooling; anyone interested in joining us can contact Richard at 266-2559.

**PEACE PILGRIM:** Beverly Garcia has provided the Center with a fresh supply of Peace Pilgrim literature, including a few year 2000 calendars. These are available at the center (donations welcome but not required). There is also a sample of a children's coloring book that can be ordered.

**DISAPPEARED:** The Center's VCR is AWOL...foul play is suspected. If anyone knows of its whereabouts, please let us know. Or if anyone has a replacement they can spare, a donation would be welcome.

**BLACK/WHITE:** Jean Kennedy-Douglas, Ken Hallstone & Richard Stone of the Black/White Friends dialogue group gave a presentation at the Interprofessional Collaboration Conference at CSUF. They focused on the continued--but rarely acknowledged--racism that underlies the culture of violence and intolerance in our society; and on the effects of "white privilege" that are all but invisible to those of us who benefit from it. Their remarks were well-received, except for one man (a self-identified police officer) who was incensed. Members of the Black/White group are available for organizations and private gatherings to discuss the issues they have dealt with over the past 3 years.

### Trident Facts:

The number of Trident submarines in the US fleet is 18; the number of D-5 Trident missiles (vehicles) per Trident sub, 24; the number of nuclear warheads (explosive part of weapon) per Trident missile, 8; and the total number of warheads currently deployed on US Trident fleet is 3,456, or nearly half of total US nuclear warheads.

There are two different warheads carried by the D-5 missile, W76 and W88, on which there are 100 and 475 kilotons (thousand tons) respectively. The total number of kilotons deployed on the present Trident fleet is 489,600.

The number of kilotons on the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima was 14, and the number of people killed by that bombing, 150,000. The number of "Hiroshimas" each Trident sub is capable of destroying is between 1,000 and 6,000!

The number of nuclear warheads deployed by the US is 7,206, and, by Russia, 6,240. The total nuclear warhead deployment of England, France, and China is 1,110.

The number of submarine-launched nuclear warheads allowed under the START II treaty is 1,728, and the number of Trident missiles "needed" to deploy these warheads is 216 (half the number currently deployed). The number of Trident submarines allowed under START II is 9.

The price of one Trident II D-5 missile is \$60m. The number of new Trident II D-5 missiles the Navy wants is 91(!). The cost of operating one Trident submarine for one year is \$77m. (Sources: Bulletin of Atomic Scientists and Natural Resources Defense Council).

Following are positions of the four major presidential candidates on three important foreign policy issues:

**Russia:** George W. Bush would end IMF loans, and threatens to cut all US aid unless Russia ends intervention in Chechnya; John McCain also threatens to cut US aid and IMF loans unless Russia ends this war. Bill Bradley criticizes Clinton's focusing on Yeltsin; he emphasizes reducing nuclear warheads. Al Gore would maintain strong relations with current leaders, emphasize building the Russian economy, and reducing nuclear weapons.

**Missile defense/nuclear weapons:** Bush supports missile defense as does McCain. Bush would withdraw from the ABM treaty unless Russia agrees to amend it, as would McCain. Bush opposed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and McCain voted against it. Bradley opposes deployment of missile defense; he supports the ABM treaty, and supported the CTBT, as did Gore. Gore supports research on missile defense.

**Defense spending:** Bush and McCain both favor increases. Bradley opposes increase. Gore favors increase by as much as \$20b/yr. (Source: San Francisco Chronicle Jan. 27, '00/ California Peace Action)

Did you know that the US provides weapons to 39 of the 48 wars currently being waged around the world? While the total budget for education, training, employment and social services in 1999 was \$49b, the military budget climbed to \$280b, which was more than all of our allies and "enemies" combined spent! The child poverty rate in the United States is 21%, and our schools need an estimated \$112 billion in repairs!



## EARTH DAY 2000

Fresno's Earth Day 2000 celebration will bring together local activist organizations, citizen's groups, and labor unions for a celebration with the goal of establishing a network of environmental, labor, and social justice organizations in Fresno.

April 22, 2000 marks the thirty-year anniversary of Earth Day. Since its conception, Earth Day has been the day designated to give something back to the earth, a day to be environmentally conscious. We have chosen April 22 as a day of solidarity between all groups in Fresno that are working for social and environmental responsibility. Fresno suffers from a lack of communication between the diverse organizations that have formed to address social and environmental ills.

These include citizen's groups, labor unions, faith-based organizations, and non-profits. What is needed is a forum in which these groups can communicate their needs and concerns. The underlying goal of Earth Day 2000 is to begin to form the network, April 22 being the first in a series of 'Environmental Roundtables', in which local groups can participate on a monthly basis.

The Fresno Earth Day 2000 committee's role will be in three main areas:

- ◆ Coordinate and form a calendar of events for the weeks before and after April 22. The committee will work with other organizations who wish to sponsor an event (a volunteer effort, a teach-in, etc.). Groups that are involved will receive media coverage and letters to solicit volunteers for events listed will be sent to schools and youth organizations. Several groups have already expressed interest in doing an event, including Tree Fresno, Fresno Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides (C.A.M.P), Gaia House, Food Not Bombs, and Critical Mass.
- ◆ Organize a tour of environmentally impacted sites in and around Fresno. Buses would go from site to site where participants would be able to take part in activities which would demonstrate first-hand the current state of the environment in our communities, including examples of environmental racism.
- ◆ Hold the Earth Day celebration open to all. Will include music, food, keynote speaker, and informational booths.

Organizations that are already a part of the planning: Fresno Center for Nonviolence, Labor/Community Alliance, Pesticide Watch, Fresno County Green Party, and Fresno C.A.M.P. For more information contact Jeremy Hofer at <jhofer@hotmail.com> or call 498-3450.

Marc Lasher, D.O., MSW Chanah Cossman, CNM, NP  
Physician Midwife and Nurse Practitioner

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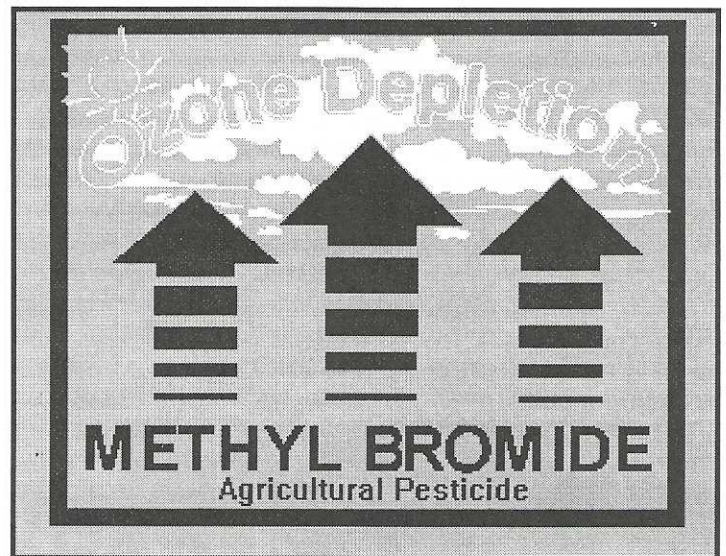
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## METHYL BROMIDE REGULATIONS & PUBLIC HEARINGS

Methyl bromide is a highly toxic nerve gas that causes brain damage, birth defects and reproductive disorders. The state still allows the use of millions of pounds each year near schools and homes. Now the state is under a court order to set safety standards that protect public health, but instead they're getting ready to adopt weak regulations that protect the use of a dangerous toxin.

Here in the valley, Methyl Bromide is used to fumigate soils prior to planting grapes, stone fruit trees, and cotton. In 1998 there was a total of 617,401.1 pounds applied for soil fumigation in Fresno County alone. Between 1995 and 1998, 2.7 million pounds of this deadly chemical were used within 1.5 miles of schools in the San Joaquin Valley. In Fresno County, 61,000 students attend schools where more than 100 lbs of methyl bromide were used within 1.5 miles during this period. Between 1995 and 1998, 78,690 pounds of methyl bromide were used within 1.5 miles of Lone Star Elementary school in Fresno.



State scientists and outside experts have repeatedly said methyl bromide standards should be tougher to provide an adequate measure of protection for children, but the Davis Administration -- like the Wilson Administration before it -- is putting pesticide politics ahead of sound science. In some ways the Davis Administration's rules are worse than what was in effect under Pete Wilson.

New rules undercut upcoming methyl bromide ban. Under an international ozone protection treaty, methyl bromide use in industrialized countries (including the U.S.) will be reduced by 50% in 2001, 70% in 2003 and banned in 2005. But instead of helping California farmers meet these deadlines, the Davis Administration is conducting business as usual and has made no provisions in the regulations to help farmers switch to sustainable alternatives.

There will only be four hearings in the whole state on these new standards, and one of them will be here in the Central Valley on March 9th. The hearing will be Thursday March 9, 6:00 p.m., University of California Kearney Agricultural Center, 9240 S. Riverbend Avenue, in Parlier.

(Continued on page 14)

# VOTE NO ON PROPOSITION 21

by: M. Gloria Hernández

In the year 2001 a young person could turn into Rip Van Winkle if Prop 21 passes. Again, Pete Wilson does a repeat no-no. What will it take for this bad man to go away? It was not enough to pick on the immigrants and refugees now he is going after our children. That bully continues to pick on individuals who cannot vote and defend themselves. This nasty proposition is going to cost us money for some new prisons, implementation of the new law and regulations and more pain for some of us parents.

What Prop. 21 does to the juvenile crime code is a nightmare! It takes our children out of the prevention and rehabilitation programs and puts them in jail with the adults. Our children will not be able to seal or clear their juvenile record when they turn 18 years of age. We all did foolish things when we were growing up maybe like writing our boy or girlfriend's name on a wet sidewalk or maybe putting your initials on a tree or picnic table. Maybe we were just lucky and never were caught, but if one did get caught, one was made to paint the table and or pay restitution. If Prop 21 passes, the felony amount for something petty like this will allow the police and prosecutors to put our children away in prison. It will allow police to wiretap the house of those suspected of being gang members. These children live with us, their parents and therefore our privacy rights will be also be violated. Additionally, Prop. 21 does not allow any money to go to prevention measures.

## *Prop 21 is very unforgiving.*

Many politicos, judges and even Fresno County Probation Chief Larry Pierce are against the proposition. Pete Wilson was just practicing with the immigrants, now our younger Californians are the bully's victims. If Prop. 21 passes, I fear that eventually our

young ones will be released from prison and they will not be happy. They will not be lenient to us, for allowing Prop. 21 to pass. The saddest thing is that they will not have contributed to our great state's economy. Instead, they will become dependent on us to care for them in the only job making system in the valley, the prisons.



Community Activist and No Nos Vamos member,  
Gloria Hernandez

Photo by: Mike Rhodes

GLOBAL EXCHANGE

## GLOBAL EXCHANGE TOUR COMES TO FRESNO

Two speakers from Global Exchange (GX) will be in Fresno to talk about Corporate Accountability and Sweatshops in Saipan. The first event of the tour will be a demonstration at The Gap store at Fashion Fair. Meet us at the main entrance to the mall at 12:30 PM on Wednesday, March 29. During the afternoon the speakers will make presentations at CSUF. A community forum will be held that evening at 7 PM at the First Congregational Church on Van Ness and Yale, near Fresno high School. On Thursday, March 30, Chie Abad will be appearing at Fresno City College.

Medea Benjamin (GX Director) will be speaking on corporate accountability of U.S. corporations operating overseas, especially in Indonesia and Vietnam. She will scrutinize labor conditions and human rights in these countries, and discuss how Global Exchange and other grassroots organizations are putting pressure on corporations to improve working and living conditions for their factory workers.

Carmencita "Chie" Abad will be traveling on her fourth national tour to speak out for positive change in garment factories. For six years she worked in a GAP sweatshop in the U.S. territory of Saipan, enduring conditions that violated both the GAP vendor code of conduct and U.S. regulations. She struggled to unionize workers, standing up to retaliation from the factory management. Since leaving Saipan to tell her story in the U.S., she has worked closely with activists around the country to build anti-sweatshop campaigns.

The speakers from Global Exchange are being brought to Fresno by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Labor/Community Alliance, Fresno Center for Nonviolence, Fresno Free College Foundation/KFCF, Peace and Conflict Studies Program, CSUF, Women's Alliance, CSUF, Department of Sociology, CSUF, the Fresno County Green Party, and the Women's Studies Program at Fresno City College. For more information call 229-9807.

DEMOCRATIZE THE GLOBAL ECONOMY!

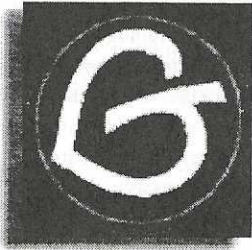
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## Green Voter Guide

The Fresno County Green Party works on implementing progressive issue and electoral strategies in Fresno County. Here are our endorsements for the March 7 Primary ballot. Contact: 497-1724, <www.greens.org/cal/fresno>.

### State Propositions.

#### *Prop. 18 - No*

Nonviolence is one of the 10 Key Values of the Green Party. Executions are motivated more by vengeance than by justice, and are carried out in disproportionate numbers among minorities and the poor. The Green Party of California opposes the death penalty, and Prop 18 by extension, on this basis. Violence begets violence.

#### *Prop 21 - No*

This proposition is expensive, unnecessary, and unduly brutal. By eliminating judicial review, more juveniles will be tried as adults and sent to adult facilities. The resulting cost to the taxpayer is estimated at \$330 million annually. Human cost is even more devastating. The brutality and terror of adult prisons does nothing to rehabilitate juvenile offenders. Statistics show the recidivism rate is higher for juveniles sentenced to adult prisons.

#### *Prop 22 - No*

This discriminatory and divisive measure is aimed at same-sex couples. The initiative would not alter the current legal definition of marriage within California, but would instead alter the policy of recognizing all marriages entered into in other states. The Green Party platform fully supports the legalization of gay and lesbian marriages and this proposition would counter that aim.

#### *Prop 23 - No*

Ever feel like your vote didn't count very much? This initiative would just make things worse. It would give you the option of voting for None-of-the-Above (NOTA), but with no effect. What's the point? Real Electoral reforms, such as Instant Runoff Voting and proportional representation, would give us satisfying choices, not deceptive options.

#### *Props 30 and 31 - Yes*

Presently there is nothing you can do if a negligent party causes you injury or property damage, and their insurance company refuses to deal with you in good faith in handling your claim. Propositions 30 and 31 will restore your right to sue the insurance company in such cases. Hold insurance companies accountable for their bad faith actions.

*For a listing of our endorsements on the other propositions please see the table on page 15.*

### Local Initiatives:

#### *City of Fresno Measure A: Voluntary Water Meters -Yes*

Thanks to flat-rate water fees, the City of Fresno has the second highest per-capita water use in the State. With a plummeting water table, and water supply contracts that will mandate metered rates in the near future, Measure A is a step in the right direction. Say yes to saving money and water.

#### *College of the Sequoias, Bond Measure J - Yes*

The Green Party supports investments in public education, particularly those that increase access to a wider range of students. We are working towards the goal of free education from preschool

through college, graduate, and professional schools. Democratize education, vote yes on J.

### Candidates:

#### *City of Fresno*

##### *Mayor - No Endorsement*

We lean towards Dan Ronquillo for his progressive policies, but could not reach consensus.

##### *City Council, District 2 - Linda Calandra*

Linda's Green-friendly positions (opposes privatization and auto-dependency) made her a standout at our candidates forum.

##### *City Council, District 4 - No Endorsement*

##### *City Council, District 6 - No Endorsement*

##### *County of Fresno Supervisor 2nd District - No Endorsement*

Despite our concerns, Lee Brand and Susan Anderson deserve consideration. Hot-headed Ken Steitz is about as far from our values as any Valley politician.

##### *Supervisor 3rd District - Juan Arambula*

With such a progressive record, the only thing Juan is missing is a Green Party registration.

### U.S. Congress:

##### *19th District - Dan Rosenberg*

Dan is closely aligned with our 10 Key Values, and deserves our support in defeating George Radanovich this November.

##### *20th District - No Endorsement*

Calvin Dooley is a pro-corporate, agri-business puppet.

### State Assembly:

##### *25th District - No Endorsement*

None of these candidates came to our forum.

##### *29th District - No Endorsement*

We lean towards Lita Reid for some positions (supports universal health care), but she is weak on the environment and is unopposed in the Democratic primary.

##### *30th District - No Endorsement*

Neither candidate came to our forum.

##### *31st District - No Endorsement*

Sarah Reyes sold the progressive community out with her anti-gay vote on AB222.

PATIENCE  
MILROD

LAWYER/LICENCIADA EN LEYES

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93728

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(Continued from page 1)

Alan Autry who recently changed his party affiliation from American Independent Party to Republican. At the forum Autry distinguished himself by being for privatization of City jobs, against the needle exchange, and against equality for domestic partners. Republican Gary Bredefeld seemed to be in competition with Autry for support of far right causes. Bredefeld said that if contracting out would save the city money then that is what we should do. Republican Chris Mathys generally played well to the crowd but when asked later about his support of rights for domestic partners distanced himself from the issue. Dan Whitehurst was the moderate. Dan wanted to study the issue of legalizing the needle exchange project (although he said he was inclined to support it) and that he thought privatization and contracting city jobs was OK as long as we make sure the sub-contractors do not break the National Labor Relations Act. Benjerman Raya and Mike Eagles participated in the debate but neither candidate gained the support of the audience. Sal Quintero and Dan Ronquillo both supported labor and community issues. Quintero was not clear on his support for the needle exchange program and Ronquillo was the most articulate and forceful candidate supporting progressive issues. The Labor/Community Alliance supports Dan Ronquillo for Mayor in the City of Fresno.

Another interesting race is the Fresno City Council and Board of Supervisors race. Ellie Bluestein said "I'm delighted that I finally have an opportunity to vote for two able women for city council and board of supervisors--Yvonne Brown and Susan Anderson. There has been a noticeable lack of women in elected office in Fresno recently, and I am looking forward to seeing that change." The Fresno Madera Tulare Kings County Central Labor Council (CLC) is also endorsing Yvonne Brown (Fresno City Council District 4) and Susan Anderson (Fresno County Board of Supervisors District 2). In addition, the CLC is endorsing Juan Arambula (Fresno County Board of Supervisors District 3) and Bob Waterston (Fresno County Board of Supervisors District 5). They have open endorsements in the Fresno City Council District 2 and 6 race, support Marc Scalzo in the Madera County Board of Supervisors race, and Debra Kazanjian and Jane York for Superior Court Judge.

According to the Fresno County Green Party, Linda Calandra's "Green-friendly positions (opposes privatization and auto-dependency) made her a standout at our candidates forum."



Ellie Bluestein says that she is "delighted that I finally have an opportunity to vote for two able women for city council and board of supervisors."  
Photo by: Howard Watkins

The greens said Juan Arambula has "such a progressive record, the only thing Juan is missing is a Green Party registration."

Howard Watkins is supporting Susan Anderson, Juan Arambula, and Bob Waterston in the Board of Supervisors race. For City Council he is endorsing Linda Calandra, Yvonne Brown, and Michael Woody.

One candidate missed by everyone making recommendations for this article was Pasquale

Carbone who is running for Fresno County Supervisor in the District 5 race. At the Responsible Choices candidate forum, while the other candidates in the District 5 race were waffling on issues like domestic partners and needle exchange Pasquale was there with the right answer. He supports equal rights for domestic partners, a living wage for workers, and would be a strong advocate on environmental issues. He is clearly the most progressive candidate in this race.

The race for the 19<sup>th</sup> congressional district is crucial. The CLC, Kennedy Club, Howard Watkins, and the Fresno County Green Party are all endorsing Dan Rosenberg. Dan deserves our support in defeating George Radanovich this November.

Candidates for the State Assembly endorsed by the CLC, Howard Watkins, and the Kennedy Club are Lita Reid (26<sup>th</sup> District), Dean Florez (30<sup>th</sup> District), and Sarah Reyes (31<sup>st</sup> District). The Fresno County Green Party does not support Reyes because "Sarah Reyes sold the progressive community out with her anti-gay vote on AB222."



The Rev. Bryan Jessup supports Dan Ronquillo for Mayor.

Photo by: Howard Watkins

## VOTE LIKE A WORKER!

By: Marcello Salcido

On the national and state scene, my vote in the forthcoming primary (and general elections) will mirror what the Federation of Labor and the United food & my former union, The United Food & Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) recommend. It's gone that way for the past 46 years and won't change simply because I've retired. Those labor organizations, cited as mere examples, spend great sums of money, time, and resources; researching and examining the ballot measures and candidates. Naturally, and unfortunately, that's something that most of us ordinary voters don't, or can't do as well.

My vote on the local arena, will follow the guidelines of the Central Labor Council (CLC) if provided to retirees. If not, I'll use the Labor Community Alliance newsletter, or visit some local union's Internet 'home page' to seek out that information. Of course the job doesn't end there. All efforts are made to convince my family members and friends to share my point of view.

Even more importantly, to insure that their votes are cast on election day. Common sense and intensive scrutiny on my part, will govern on some of the issues (propositions etc.) including some of the 'open,' or non endorsed candidates. My primary focus generally weighs heavily on; pro worker and environmental and human rights and educational and local zoning issues. Candidates sharing favorable concerns in those areas earn consideration for my vote."

# "NACARA LEGISLATION OFFERS HOPE TO CENTRAL AMERICAN REFUGEES"

By Sushma Raman and Mark Silverman

In the fall of 1997, Congress enacted the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) into law, to enable hundreds of thousands of eligible Central Americans to eventually obtain legal permanent resident status in the United States. Many of these refugees had fled El Salvador and Guatemala in the early 1980s, fleeing civil war, persecution, torture, and murders, much of which ironically may have been sponsored by the United States government in its efforts to fight Communism.

When the first waves of Central Americans arrived in the 1980s, the refugees felt compelled to return to their home countries after the civil war ended. But by the early 1990s, it was evident that their home was now the United States: many had children that were born in the U.S. and were attending schools here, many had established businesses or new social ties in their adopted homeland. But legally and politically, the refugees were disenfranchised. This new law could change that.

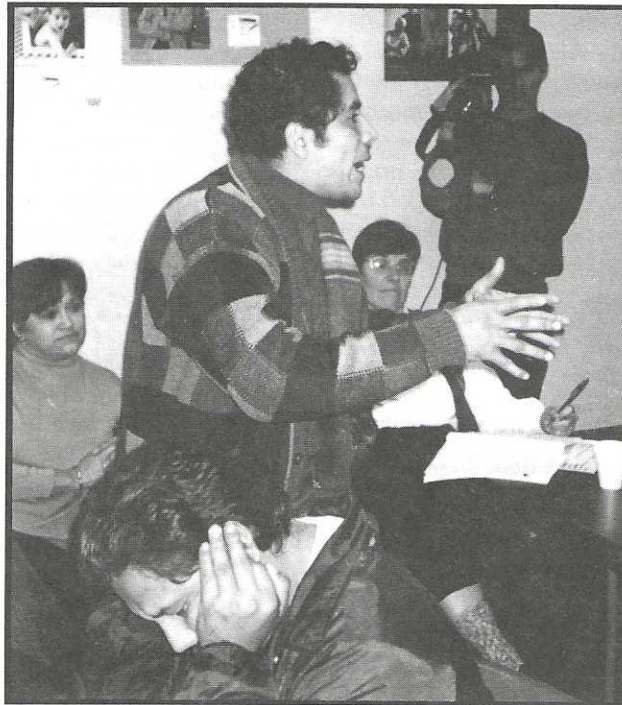
The situation of the family of Angelina and Pedro Tomas illustrates both the problems of our prior policy towards refugees and the hope that the new law offers. One day in 1981, Angelina, Pedro and their three year-old son, Regino, were in their vegetable garden adjacent to the family home in San Miguel Acatan, Guatemala. Suddenly, soldiers arrived at the house, pulled Pedro's parents from the house, yelling at them in Spanish, which they did not understand, since they spoke a Mayan language. They were told that they were subversives. The soldiers put them against a wall and shot them to death, while Angelina kept her hand over the mouth of her son so that he would not cry out. The Tomas family, along with thousands of other indigenous Guatemalans, fled immediately to Mexico and eventually entered the U.S. in 1984.

The INS arrested them in an orchard near Fresno, California in 1985 and placed them in deportation proceedings. An immigration judge denied their asylum application in 1986 and they appealed. Their deportation case as well as those of thousands of other refugees was frozen by the ABC settlement. Angelina and Pedro now have four U.S. citizen children. Regino, the three year old son who watched the Guatemalan army murder his grandparents, is now in his twenties, works, volunteers with a church group, and wants to go to college once his immigration status is regularized.

Although he and his family are hopeful, much of the requirements for eligibility are strict. Eligible clients must have resided in the United States for a certain period of time, must demonstrate good moral character and must demonstrate that they

and their families will suffer extreme hardship if sent back to their home country. There is no blanket finding of hardship-- each client must meet the hardship requirement. The interim regulations issued do, however, establish a "rebuttable presumption" of hardship for most NACARA applicants.

Deporting hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans and Guatemalans who are unable to meet the eligibility requirements under NACARA could destabilize the economies of those countries - remittances from refugees in the United States to family members back home total \$1.5 billion to El Salvador and \$700 million to Guatemala annually. The importance of the refugees' remittances has forged a broad consensus that a generous, simplified program for regularizing the status of Central Americans in the U.S. furthers a number of important American interests, including increasing political and economic stability in Central America.



Luiz Melendez makes a point at the immigrant rights/union organizing conference.

Photo by: Mike Rhodes

The Tomas family is now applying for NACARA. They will be presumed to have met the "extreme hardship" requirement unless the INS offers evidence to the contrary. Eighteen years after fleeing the massacres in Guatemala, they have hope of obtaining legal permanent resident status thanks to the NACARA legislation and its common sense implementation by the Department of Justice.

Others are not so fortunate. Gloria, age 22, does not qualify for NACARA (even though her parents do) because she entered the U.S. after the 1990 cut-off date. Had she been born in Nicaragua rather than El Salvador she would qualify for permanent residency. Gloria participated in a mock interview with the attorney presenter at a NACARA training in San Francisco.

After explaining why Gloria was not eligible, the attorney said to the audience, "We have to advise

Gloria she is not eligible right now, and there is no legal avenue for her to pursue." And then he asked Gloria, "So what are you going to do?"

Gloria responded. "I have become a leader in Centro Latino Cuzcatlan (a grassroots Central American group in San Francisco). We are organizing to persuade Congress to change NACARA." Thanks to the efforts of people like Gloria and her organization as well as immigrant advocates and church groups, Representative Chris Smith (R-NJ) with the backing of the Clinton administration and 27 co-sponsors, has introduced H.R. 2722, the Central American and Haitian Adjustment Act of 1999, which would provide relief and parity to thousands of persons like Gloria. It is part of a comprehensive effort to support democratization and stabilization in Central America and Haiti, and provide equitable treatment to people from these countries by enacting essentially the same rules afforded Nicaraguans and Cubans through NACARA. The current requirements for Nicaraguans and Cubans are far less

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 9)

We know that the State is not expecting lots of people to show up here in Fresno and urge them to strengthen public health protections. If we can get LOTS of people to show up, it will do more than almost anything else we could do to prove to the Governor that people in our area support reasonable, common-sense measures to protect our communities from dangerous pesticides.

What You Can Do:

- ◆ Call Pesticide Watch for more information: (800) 401-6510.
- ◆ Please come to the public hearing on these new rules. We need you to show your support for stronger protections.
- ◆ Send a letter immediately! Write Governor Gray Davis and the Department of Pesticide Regulation, protesting the Administration's failure to protect the public from methyl bromide. Please email or send us a copy (contact Pesticide Watch for sample letter).

Governor Gray Davis, State Capitol Building Sacramento, CA 95814, fax: 916-445-4633 <graydavis@governor.ca.gov>, cc: (VERY IMPORTANT: for your letter to be an official comment on these regulations, you MUST send a copy to DPR Director Paul Helliker, fax: (916)324-1452 or phelliker@cdrp.ca.gov).

(Continued from page 13)

stringent. They do not need to demonstrate extreme hardship. They simply have to show that they have resided in the U.S. since December 1, 1995, whereas the Salvadorans and Guatemalans must have been here since specific dates in 1990. The proposed legislation both directly and indirectly would also result in decreasing future undocumented immigration from these countries.

There is a tremendous opportunity to once and for all bring to a close the anguish and uncertainty that thousands of Central American refugees have been living with for over a decade. Those interested in becoming involved in the campaign should contact Gloria or others at the Centro at (415) 824-5928 or in the Central Valley, Edwin Perazas of NCCIR at (559) 490-1087.

*Sushma Raman is a Program Officer with the Emma Lazarus Fund, a \$50 million grantmaking initiative established by philanthropist George Soros to assist immigrants and refugees. Mark Silverman is the Director of the NACARA Project at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center, a non-profit organization based in San Francisco that provides technical assistance and trainings to immigration practitioners.*

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## WHY I AM VOTING NO ON PROPOSITION 21, 22, & 25

by: Dr. Sari Dworkin

### *Vote No on the Knight Initiative, Proposition 22*

I am urging a No vote on the Knight Initiative, Proposition 22. While this one sentence initiative seems simple and straightforward it actually has the potential to create more harm than good. First of all, as the editorial in the Fresno Bee states, California already defines marriage as a union between a man and a woman and since no state has legalized gay/lesbian marriage, this proposition is unnecessary and redundant. Secondly California is a very diverse state and families are constituted in many different ways. There are many gay and lesbian couples in long-term relationships and who currently have children. If family values and the protection of children are important to the citizens of this state then why would voters want to approve an initiative which has the potential to nullify domestic partnership arrangements and adoptions of children already living in gay and lesbian families? The psychological research consistently shows no evidence of any harm to children in loving families no matter how those families are constituted. Thirdly, the majority of the arguments in favor of this initiative are religious arguments. This is however a civil rights issue in a country that constitutionally mandates separation of church and state. The religious arguments often state that homosexuality is "unnatural." We must be careful about what we, as a nation, define as "natural" and "unnatural." Historically this argument was used to prevent marriages between blacks and whites and to deny the vote to women! According to Reverend Alan Jones of Grace Cathedral Church in San Francisco, "What we call human nature is inextricably bound up with politics, power, and social structures. Those who take issue with the word 'marriage' when applied to people of the same sex need to discern the subtext of this divisive and polarizing initiative."

### *Vote No on Proposition 21 Juvenile Justice*

This initiative will create further increases in California's already burgeoning prison population. The United States already has more prisoners per capita than almost any other country in the world. Every "Get Tough On Crime" initiative hurts minority groups and the poor more than any other groups in society. Juveniles involved in the criminal justice system need rehabilitation, not punishment as adults. This initiative will cost the taxpayers up to \$1 billion every year and will neither deter nor decrease juvenile crime. The money would be better spent on education, childcare, health care, and job creation, approaches that have been shown to lower crime.

### *Vote No on Proposition 25*

#### *Campaign Finance Reform Initiative*

This proposition is deceptively titled a "reform." Everyone agrees that campaign finance is in desperate need of reform but, this initiative, which is opposed by the League of Women Voters who have intensely studied its ramifications, contains too many loopholes. It favors the rich and penalizes working people. Local and international unions would be grouped together for purposes of campaign contributions. This would limit the amount of money available for opposing anti-worker propositions. At the same time individuals in large corporations could donate huge amounts of money for propositions they support. The California Labor Federation states that Prop 25 "will allow corporations to continue outspending unions 11 to 1."

# ORGANIZATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS CALIFORNIA BALLOT PROPOSITIONS

March 7, 2000 <b>THE PROPOSITIONS</b> Code: Y = Yes N = No	LEAGUE	ACLP	COUNCIL	AARP	PPA	CNA	LABOR	CTA	PTA	SIERRA	FRIENDS	HH	FCGP	MY VOTE
1A Authorizes Indian gambling compacts.							Y					Y	Y	
12 \$2.1 billion parks bond.	Y		Y	Y			Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	
13 \$1.7 billion water bond.	Y		Y				Y				Y	Y	Y	
14 \$350 million library bond.	Y		Y				Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	
15 \$220 million forensic crime laboratory bond.			N				Y					Y	N	
16 \$50 million veterans' home bond.			Y	Y			Y					Y		
17 Legalizes fundraising raffles conducted by nonprofit organizations.			N	Y			Y				N	Y	Y	
18 Expands special circumstances that make accused murderers eligible for death penalty.		N	N								N	N	N	
19 Expands authority and increases penalties for 2nd-degree murder of UC and BART police.			N				Y				N	Y	N	
20 Designates a percentage of California State Lottery for textbooks.	N		Y				N	N			N	N	N	
21 Increases "gang-related" penalties. Felony legal protections reduced for youth 14 and older.	N	N	N			N	N	N	N		N	N	N	
22 Declares that only marriages between a man and a woman are valid or recognized in California.	N	N	N		N	N	N	N			N	N	N	
23 Provides that voters in elections for state and federal offices may vote for "none of the above."			N				N				N	N	N	
25 Political campaigns: Expands disclosures; establishes contribution limits; provides public financing.	N		N			N	N	N			Y	N		
26 Allows local school bond measures to be approved by a simple majority instead of a 2/3 vote.	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	
27 Permits candidates to voluntarily declare intent to serve no more than 3 terms in Congress.	N		N				N				N	N	N	
28 Repeals Proposition 10 tobacco surtaxes.	N		N	N		N	N		N		N	N	N	
29 Repeals gambling compacts between Governor Wilson and 11 CA Indian tribes.												N	N	
30 & 31 Referenda on legislation allowing consumers to sue insurance companies for bad-faith claims actions.						Y	Y				Y	Y	Y	

**CODE KEY**

LEAGUE..... League of Women Voters	PPA..... CA Planned Parenthood Affiliates	SIERRA..... Sierra Club of CA
ACLU..... American Civil Liberties Union	CNA..... CA Nurses Association	FRIENDS..... Friends of Committee on Legislation
COUNCIL..... CA Council of Churches	LABOR..... CA Labor Federation, AFL/CIO	HH..... Howard's Hopefuls
AARP..... American Association of Retired Persons	CTA..... CA Teachers Association	FCGP..... Fresno County Green Party
	PTA..... CA Parent Teacher Association	

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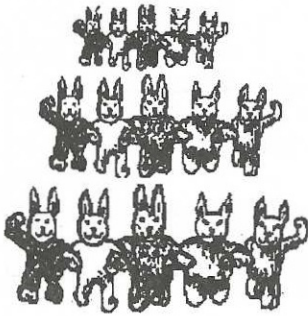
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