

A COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

FREE!

The Voice of the Progressive Movement since 1996



We need more backpacks and school supplies - Not the militarization of West Fresno. Our children are NOT terrorists! See the articles about Fresno's War on Gangs on pages 1, 14, 15 & 16.

The War On Gangs – Let's Start Over

One of the joys of being a criminal defense appellate attorney is that I get to read trial transcripts in pajamas. Not a lot of fire in the belly needed for this job. It's like watching the good and bad of life unfold on television while munching down popcorn.

Not real exciting, but I'd do a lot not to have to dress for success.

I read gang transcripts often. All my clients are convicted, most are in prison. I'm at my desk, cozy in my jammies, picking through their trial transcripts with a questioning mind. Did this trial go the way it should have gone? Is there a chance justice was not served in this case?

Recently I read a gang-related transcript that caused me concern. A 14-year-old Mexican boy was arrested and convicted of carrying a "billy" – actually a baseball bat. He was riding his bike through a gang neighborhood with the bat tucked under his jacket and when the cop stopped him he quickly admitted he was carrying it for protection. He was arrested, booked, convicted, put on probation. Now he and his family are under strict supervision and are part of our criminal justice system.

By Catherine Campbell

Given the stats on the effects of detention, arrest and incarceration of youth, this boy will probably stay in that system for a long time to come.

If I carried a baseball bat in my car or put one by my bedside for the same reason, I would be committing exactly the same crime, but I'd never be arrested. Neither would a kid carrying a bat through Fig Garden.

I have another gang case where a massive Mexican wedding in gang territory in Los Angeles went awry, and two gangsters high on methamphetamine and alcohol took off to a nearby liquor store where – standing outside a phone booth yelling their gang name – they shot and murdered a Guatemalan migrant who just spent his last five dollars to call his wife and four children at home.

To me it's obvious that the 14-year-old with the bat needed help, not a record. The murderous gangsters should go to prison. But what's the relationship between the two cases? If the 14-year-old got help rather than a record, would he be less likely to end up being the drug-addicted, what-the-f---k-zone gangster who kills?

To me the answer is obvious, and I'm not alone.

The Justice Department's Justice Policy Institute report: Gang Wars: The Failure of Enforcement Tactics and the Need for Effective Public Safety Strategies, reports that enforcement (punitive) strategies for gang abatement are less effective in curtailing gang violence than preventive strategies. Duh. They are also more expensive. Duh.

The most successful programs are those that involve mental health personnel in the community in family therapy to get kids out of gangs and into school, work, and positive activities. And, guess what, what we have done in Fresno is exactly the opposite. We've beefed up the police and stripped mental health services for families. How smart is that?

I would add to this that community programs to help kids in trouble academically, in combination with family-oriented therapy (and by therapy, I don't mean Freud – I mean strategies for effective family management and communication), have shown enormous benefits because

Continued on page 15

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COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

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

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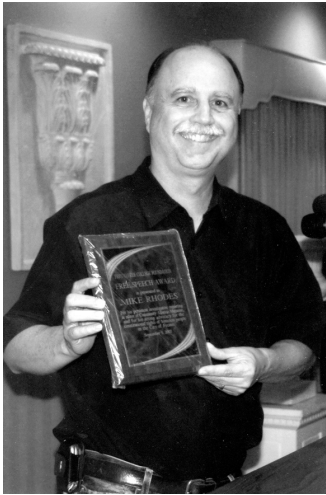
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The Community Alliance newspaper reserves the right to edit all articles for space and clarity.



From the Editor

Last month, the Fresno Free College Foundation (they are the owners and operators of KFCF 88.1 FM) presented me with the prestigious 2007 “Free Speech Award.” The award was given to recognize the investigative reporting I have done for

this newspaper in covering the story of the homeless in this community. It was an honor to be given this award and I believe it is an acknowledgment of the important role alternative/independent media plays locally.

KFCF, the Community Alliance, and other independent media are able to not only tell stories left unreported or under reported by the corporate media, but we are able to change public policy. This is what happened with our coverage of the homeless in this community. We reported on the brutal attacks by the City of Fresno - how they conducted sweeps of homeless encampments, bulldozing and destroying everything in their path. Many homeless people lost everything they owned (ID, clothing, tents, tools, wedding photos, and in one case the urn of a grandchild’s ashes).

On one such raid, the headline in The Fresno Bee (our daily corporate press) was “*Cleaning house, Fresno crews descend on downtown area to tidy up a haven for homeless.*”

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The Bee’s shameless pandering to the Fresno Police Department and other special interests in City Hall would be funny if it were not, in fact, tragic. Too many people get their news from the corporate media whose primary purpose is to represent the interests of the rich & ruling class. The Community Alliance is invaluable to our readers because we give a voice to the voiceless, support the interests of the disenfranchised, and we have a preference for the poor.

This paper’s ongoing news coverage on the homeless resulted in a lawsuit being filed to stop the city from taking and immediately destroying homeless peoples property. A federal judge issued a preliminary injunction and the city was forced to uphold the constitution of the United States. City policy was changed! The city is even providing one homeless encampment with portable toilets, trash bins and water. They are also looking to establish a “free zone” where the homeless can camp on city property without being harassed and attacked. These are significant improvements that were brought about by a vigilant, aggressive, and independent Free Press.

Pamela Kincaid was also given the Free Speech Award by FFCF/KFCF. Pam was a homeless woman and the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit against the City of Fresno. She died under suspicious and disturbing circumstances, just as the lawsuit was starting to move through federal court. See last month’s CA newspaper for the complete details of what we know about her death. Pam was honored by FFCF/KFCF for her bravery and willingness to stand up for justice and civil liberties for all homeless people.

We have nothing new to report about the circumstances and investigation of Pam’s death. Even though Pam was beaten nearly to death, clearly the victim of a crime, the Fresno Police Department never investigated. The sheriff’s department, who claim to be investigating her death, has never interviewed me or the eyewitness to the crime. The coroner’s report has not been released and I have heard nothing from the California Health Department about how a patient at UMC (the medical facility Pam was at) could somehow end up going over a fourth floor balcony. We expect more from law enforcement and demand a complete investigation into the beating and death of Pamela Kincaid!

The War on Terrorism Comes Home to Roost

This month’s Community Alliance newspaper focuses on new developments in the City of Fresno’s war on

gangs. The Fresno Police Department has taken an extremely aggressive position on reducing and eliminating gangs - the Bulldog Gangs have recently been under attack. But, there is something different about the city’s current attack on West Side gangs - several high profile locally elected officials are making a conscious effort to connect these African American gangs with the War on Terrorism.

Fresno City Council member Jerry Duncan, stressing the urgency of this effort compared the campaign to the war on terror. Duncan, speaking about gang members, said “make no mistake about it, they are terrorists and they are as much of terrorists as those people in Iraq that are blowing up innocent people.” Mayor Alan Autry said “the connection with the war on terror and the war against gangs at home is not a spin, it is a very real connection.”

The Community Alliance is concerned that the Fresno Police Department is targeting the people living in poor African American neighborhoods as “the enemy” in the war against terrorism. We asked our reporter Francine Ramos to visit these targeted neighborhoods and see what the people living there had to say for themselves. We wanted to know if they thought militarizing their neighborhoods, more gang injunctions (so family members can’t talk to each other), repression, and sending more of their neighbors to jail would improve the situation. Not surprisingly, we found what is needed is economic development, jobs that pay a living wage, more parks and recreation, and better educational opportunities.

Our series of articles about the city’s War on Terrorism start on page one with a great contribution by Catherine Campbell entitled “The War on Gangs - Let’s Start Over.” Campbell offers concrete alternatives to targeting West Fresno residents as the enemy in this domestic War on Terrorism. Additional stories are on pages 14 - 17 where we go into the “Dog Pound,” give a voice to some of the people who are targeted (by the police) for elimination, and give you a view of West Fresno that you will get nowhere else.

If you enjoy this newspaper I hope you will subscribe (see the subscription form below) and consider making an additional contribution to give us the resources we need to build a powerful movement for peace, social, and economic justice.

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Living Lightly: Finding Simplicity in a Complex World—A Free Community Event

by Lorenzo Bassman

On Sunday, October 14, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., La Querencia, Fresno's first Cohousing community, will host a free workshop on exploring ways to live a joyful and satisfying life by making conscious choices about how to use your time and resources. The featured speaker will be *Voluntary Simplicity* practitioner Jon Myhre, co-author of *Get Satisfied: How Twenty People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough*. The event will take place at the Woodward Park Library, 944 East Perrin Avenue, near Champlain. You'll have an opportunity to participate in small group discussions with long-time practitioners of simple living, to meet other like-minded people, and to get practical suggestions for creating a simpler life.

The *voluntary simplicity* movement began in the early '90s in the Pacific Northwest. Now an estimated 10-12% of U.S. adults practice some form of voluntary simplicity, with that number predicted to rise drastically in the years ahead. Voluntary simplicity means doing/having/living more with less—more time, meaning, joy, satisfaction, relationships, community—less money, material possessions, stress, competition, isolation. It doesn't mean depriving yourself or buying "cheap" and always pinching pennies, and it doesn't mean poverty. It does mean wanting what you have, finding joy in having less and recovering the connection with other people and with the Earth that alone makes life really worthwhile. Voluntary simplicity is a movement of people who are questioning the consumerist society's insistence that possessions, especially of the newest design and color, are the means of fulfillment, and questioning that any material possession can possibly be "to die for."

The benefits of voluntary simplicity to the individual are great—more time to spend with family, less money spent on almost everything, less stress in high-paying jobs or commuting to them, less worry over possessions being stolen or damaged, more satisfaction in learning to do things for oneself. But the benefits to society and to the Earth are also significant—less pollution from transportation and less need for new roads, less environmental impact from resource extraction, more community cohesiveness, more grassroots democracy as people take more interest in how their communities operate, more ecological restoration as people find

simple pleasure in connecting with their local environment and seek to heal it, and a flowering of local culture—music, storytelling, drama, games, poetry.

La Querencia/Fresno Cohousing, who is hosting this workshop, is a group of families, couples and individuals creating a 28-household Earth-friendly, intergenerational neighborhood developed by the residents themselves in North Fresno. The community will cluster privately-owned, self-sufficient homes around common facilities to provide an old-fashioned neighborhood feel where neighbors know each other and kids run and play in between the houses. The shared facilities will include children's play areas, a workshop, a pool, spa and exercise facility, a teen hangout, and a beautiful common house with gourmet kitchen, large dining room for community dinners and other gatherings, a sitting area, guest apartment, kid's room and a shared laundry facility. The homes will be among the most energy efficient in the Valley and will also feature bright, naturally daylit rooms and low-toxicity building materials, shared organic gardens and edible landscaping, a bicycle storage facility, and proximity to schools, parks, shopping, restaurants and bicycle paths.

La Querencia will be a supportive, intergenerational community, with an emphasis on including families with young children as well as every other kind of family. In addition to the obvious social advantages of living near friends, residents will have more free time because many of the routine activities of life will be shared such as meal preparation and yard work. Expensive or rarely used tools and recreational equipment owned by the group will be available to all. Car-pooling and childcare will be easier to arrange.

There will be three home sizes—2-bedroom, 1¾-bath flats; 3-bedroom, 2½-bath townhouses, and 4-bedroom, 2½-bath townhouses. Each is an independent unit which includes kitchen, dining and living rooms, bedrooms and baths, large front porches, and individual back yards. Our architect has worked with us to maximize efficiency of space and energy, and you will see evidence of sensitivity toward the natural environment including reduced home size, sharing of resources and community recycling. By giving careful consideration to the placement of residences, parking, walkways,

swimming pool, play and garden areas, open spaces, and the common house, cohousing maximizes opportunities for neighbors to cross paths throughout the day. The private residences will be clustered on the site leaving more shared open space, the dwellings will face each other across a courtyard, and cars will be parked on the periphery allowing for pedestrian walkways and gathering spots between the homes.

Our community has no political, religious, or ideological orientation. The only expectations are agreement with the principles of cohousing and with our vision and values statement. As in any healthy community, people will be tolerant and respectful toward others. Members value privacy as well as social contact, and our neighborhood design reflects a respect for each other's needs for privacy.

The featured speaker of *Living Lightly: Finding Simplicity in a Complex World* is Jon Myhre, who practiced architecture and landscape architecture in Los Angeles and Pasadena for over forty years before retiring to Ojai, California. Among his hundreds of projects are city and county parks, college campuses, airports, historical preservations, and residential work of every description. Since moving to Ojai, he has turned his major creative efforts to writing. His short stories, columns, and poetry have been published in major newspapers, and he is currently working on his first novel. He travels extensively and spends quality time with his two daughters and two grandchildren.

"People of all ages and income levels are asking, 'Is my life only about making more money and spending it?'" says Gerald Celente, director of the Trends Research Institute. "And a lot are answering, 'No. This is insane.'" So if your home is too cluttered, if you're stressed out and don't have enough time for family, friends and yourself, and if you are concerned about the environment and the future of the planet, you can find solutions. Our voluntary simplicity presentation will take place on Sunday, October 14, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., at the Woodward Park Library, 944 East Perrin Avenue near Champlain. Admission is free, and supervised children's activities will be provided. To reserve a seat or for more information, contact Pat at 866-246-7717, email info@fresnocohousing.org or visit www.fresnocohousing.org

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Lorenzo Bassman is a musician and a future resident of LaQuerencia. He can be contacted at lbassman@pacbell.net



NOTE: FUTURE SOLAR PANELS SHOWN DASHED

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Largest Private Sector Union Organizing Drive in Fresno History

By Mike Rhodes

Workers at Community Medical Center have started a union organizing drive to improve working conditions and salaries. Lydia Martinez, a licensed vocational nurse at Community Medical Center, said “it is not right that there are many of us that work at these hospitals who can not afford health insurance for our families. . . there are people who give care all day long, but can’t afford the same care for their own families.”

But, Martinez said her support for the union was not just about the money and benefits. She said “we’re standing up today because we need a voice in making the right decisions for patients at these facilities. By forming a union, we’ll be able to come together to advocate for our patients in partnership with management here.”

Several local elected officials spoke at the press conference announcing the organizing drive.. Fresno City Council member Cynthia Sterling said she was there to “ask Community Medical Center to respect the rights of its care givers to choose for themselves whether to be a union.” Bob Waterston and Susan Anderson from the Fresno County Board of Supervisors and Fresno City Council member Mike Dages hit on the same theme of calling for fair elections that will give the workers an opportunity to decide whether or not to join the union.

“Whether to form a union is a decision for the workers alone to make,” said Anderson. “We’re here today in support of a fair election agreement and to say to Community Medical Centers that we expect its leadership to respect workers’ right to organize.”

Service Employee International Union, United Healthcare Workers - West has been organizing at Community Hospital for about a year. The hospital employs more than 6,000 workers, making this the largest private sector organizing drive in Fresno history. SEIU-UHW has 145,000 members and is the largest hospital and healthcare union in the western United States.

“Forming a union will mean great things not only for the workers, but for the patients at this hospital as well,” said Nick Stancato, a Kaiser Permanente worker and member of SEIU-UHW. “Many of the improvements to patient care that we have made are because of the strength that workers gained by joining UHW. The Fresno community stands to benefit from the decision these hospital workers are making.”

Lydia Martinez said one reason for the organizing drive is that they want Community Hospital to pay competitive salaries and benefits so “we can retain the good employees we have. We want a competitive wage increase for all categories and job descriptions. We have some people working two jobs to make ends meet.”

Managements response at CMC was swift. On the day the organizing drive was announced Ginny Burdick, Vice President of Human Resources at Community, stated that they had just approved \$10 million to increase employee salaries. The memo included a reminder that the salary could not be “unilaterally implemented” to union represented employees. In yet another memo sent out after the press conference, Burdick warned all employees about the dangers of signing union cards.

In the next few days management compared signing a union card to writing a blank check, they started forcing workers to attend anti-union meetings, and hired anti-union consultants. The workers responded by delivering a letter to CEO Tim Joslin, calling for fair election, free of threats and intimidation.

Speaking at the press conference, preceding the delivery of the letter, Letty Mendoza an employee of the hospital spoke about what has been going on since they announced the organizing drive last week. Mendoza said “yesterday I had to go to an anti-union meeting. They said that they didn’t care if we formed a union. He just said he wanted us to have all the facts, but

those facts were lies. He offended me because he said only 20 people came to the press conference on the 27th of last month. I told him that 200 people came. . . I kept correcting his lies and then a charge nurse came and made me leave the meeting. That’s not right and it made some of my co-workers mad.”

Cynthia Sterling stood with the workers as they delivered the letter to Joslin. She said “I’m here today to support the free and fair election agreement proposal for healthcare workers at Community Medical Centers. This agreement will protect the rights of those workers to decide for themselves if they want to form a union. These workers want to become union to improve the lives of their patients and their families.”

John Donaldson, a former member of the Fresno County Board of Supervisors said he was there to support “a fair election agreement between the two sides so that there is no intimidation. . . so people can learn the facts and vote the way they feel, rather than by being intimidated.”

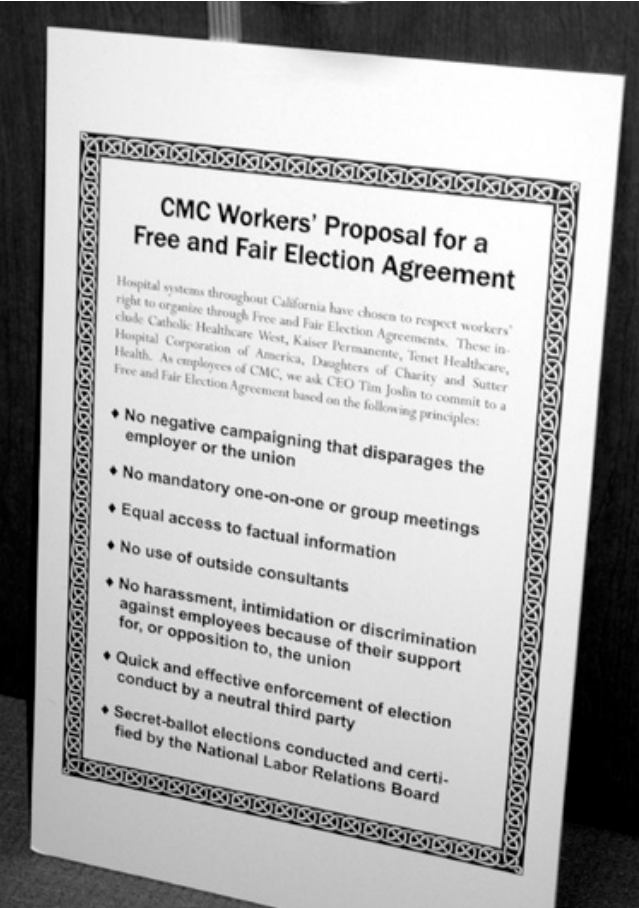
“The kind of behavior we’ve seen in the last week at Community Medical Centers is making it significantly harder to provide high-quality care to our patients,” said Yvette Chavez, a patient care advocate at Community Regional Medical Center. “We’re already understaffed - we can’t afford to spend hours at a time in meetings that only offer misinformation. That’s why we’re proposing a solution everyone can agree with.”

After the press conference the workers and their allies went into the building where Joslin has his office. Arriving on the fourth floor, with letter in hand, they knocked on Joslin’s door. Several workers told me they heard people in the office, but the door was locked and was not opened. The workers left their proposal for a free and fair election leaned up against the door.

This is what the letter said:



Former Fresno County Board of Supervisor John Donaldson introduces members of the Fresno Fair Election Commission. They held a press conference on September 12 to announce their efforts to ensure free and fair elections at Community Medical Center (CMC). CMC workers are currently organizing a union to represent about 2,000 workers.



This is the proposal for free and fair elections.

Hospital systems throughout California have chosen to respect workers' right to organize through Free and Fair Election Agreements. These include Catholic Healthcare West, Kaiser Permanente, Tenet Healthcare, Hospital Corporation of America, Daughters of Charity and Sutter Health. As employees of CMC, we ask CEO Tim Joslin to commit to a Free and Fair Election Agreement based on the following principles:

- No negative campaigning that disparages the employer or the union.
- No mandatory one-on-one or group meetings.
- Equal access to factual information
- No use of outside consultants
- No harassment, intimidation or discrimination against employees because of their support for, or opposition to, the union.
- Quick and effective enforcement of election conduct by a neutral third party.

- Secret-ballot elections conducted and certified by the National Labor Relations Board.

A local coalition of community, medical, elected, and religious leaders have formed the Fresno Fair Election Commission to ensure that workers at Fresno Community Medical Centers are allowed to decide whether or not to unionize in an environment free of threats and intimidation. The commission released a statement to the workers. It said "we have formed our commission because of your intention to form a union with SEIU-UHW. We would like to meet with you as soon as possible to discuss the establishment of fair and simple ground rules for an election process to determine union representation."

Patience Milrod, who is a local attorney and a member of the commission, speaking about the employees campaign to organize a union, said that "workers should have a fair opportunity to make that decision for themselves. The hospital needs to not spend its money or the public's money fighting the union with the tactics we have seen other hospitals use in the past, including

intimidating workers in one-on-one meetings and other kinds of disinformation campaigns."

Roger Larson, the former Chief of Medicine at University Medical Center and a commission member, said that Community Medical Center has supplied about 30% of the physicians who are practicing in this community "so it is essential, it is critical, that this hospital can function well and it will do so best when it has employees that are treated fairly and that is our goal."

Rev. Walt Parry of Metro Ministry said that he agreed to be on this commission for two primary reasons "one is that the focus of Community Medical Centers and all the workers needs to be to maintain and improve patient care. . . secondly, no employee at Community Medical Center should be intimidated by either the Community Medical Center administration or other employees or by the union. It is with that hope that I have agreed to be on this commission - that there can be a fair election that is totally legal and that nobody is intimidated in the process and throughout it all the primary emphasis of all of the people involved is on improving patient care."



Randy Ghan, Secretary-Treasurer of Fresno, Tulare, Madera, Kings County Central Labor Council spoke at the press conference to kick off the union organizing drive.



Fresno City Council member Cynthia Sterling said she was there to "ask Community Medical Center to respect the rights of its care givers to choose for themselves whether to be a union."



Letty Mendoza, a sterile processing technician at CMC, is a union supporter. She helped deliver the letter demanding a Free and Fair Election Agreement to CMC/CEO Tim Joslin.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

THIS WEEK: A "HANDY" GUIDE TO THE HOUSING MARKET--FEATURING THE **INVISIBLE HAND OF THE FREE MARKET!** IF YOU'RE INVISIBLE, HOW COME I CAN SEE YOU?

IT'S THE MAGIC OF THE MARKET, SON! NOW--LET'S GET **STARTED!**

BACK IN THE **OLDEN** DAYS, BANKERS USED TO INSIST ON ALL SORTS OF "DOCUMENTATION" BEFORE THEY'D GIVE SOMEONE A HOUSING LOAN--EVEN IF THAT PERSON **REALLY** WANTED A LOAN!

BUT THEN I INTERVENED--INTRODUCING THOSE BANKERS TO MY FRIENDS ON **WALL STREET**, WHO STARTED **BUYING** MORTGAGE LOANS FROM BANKS AND SELLING THEM TO **INVESTORS!**

THINGS BEGAN TO LOOSEN UP WHEN LENDERS NO LONGER HAD TO WORRY ABOUT PETTY DETAILS LIKE BEING **REPAID!** AND EVENTUALLY THE **SUB-PRIME** MARKET TOOK OFF--AND THEN WHAT A PARTY WE HAD!

RATES WERE LOW, MONEY WAS PLENTIFUL, AND HOUSING PRICES **SKYROCKETED**--ER--I MEAN TO SAY, ROSE TO THEIR **PROPER VALUATION**, AS DETERMINED BY THE INHERENT **RATIONALITY** OF THE **FREE MARKET!**

HEH, HEH.

YEAH, THINGS WERE GOING **GREAT**--UNTIL MILLIONS OF BORROWERS INEXPLICABLY BEGAN TO **DEFAULT** ON THEIR LOANS! **NO ONE** COULD HAVE SEEN **THAT** COMING!

BUT WASN'T IT **INEVITABLE** THAT--

AHEM! ABSOLUTELY **NO ONE!** BUT NOT TO WORRY! AS ALWAYS, THE **INVISIBLE HAND** OF THE **FREE MARKET** HAS THE **SOLUTION!**

WHICH IS...?

A MASSIVE **GOVERNMENT BAILOUT!** PROBLEM **SOLVED!** ON TO THE **NEXT OPPORTUNITY!**

I GOTTA SAY, YOU DON'T SEEM VERY RATIONAL TO **ME.**

TELL IT TO THE **HAND, KID.**

Foreign National Prisoners Targeted For Out-Of-State Transfers

By: Boston Woodard



Sophanareth Sok is a foreign national. He is a 27-year-old Cambodian serving a 15-year sentence. He is married and has strong family ties in the Sacramento area, about a thirty-five minute drive from where he is presently doing his time at Solano State Prison in Vacaville, California.

In another smoke-and-mirror attempt to clean up the management mess which has allowed severe overcrowding to manifest within California’s 33 state prisons, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law AB900, a bipartisan bill that provides \$7.8 billion to upgrade prison facilities including medical and mental health units, to provide 53,000 new prison beds, and to cover the cost of forcefully transferring thousands of foreign national prisoners to out-of-state private prisons.

According to California Penal Code Section 11191(a), the sole reason being used by Solano prison officials to justify the transfers clearly reads, “...no inmate sentenced under California law may be committed or transferred to an institution outside of this state, unless he or she has executed a written consent to the transfer.” The transfers from Solano State Prison are a microcosm of what is happening throughout California’s 33 prisons statewide. On July 20 and 27, some 200 foreign nationals (mostly from Mexico) were shipped to Mississippi. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) proffers an aggressive schedule that will ship approximately 120 foreign nationals to Mississippi every couple of weeks.

PCIII9I(a) further reads, “The inmate shall have the right to a private consultation [of his choice] with an attorney..., or with a public defender if the inmate cannot afford counsel, concerning his rights and obligations...”

In a preemptive move to cover their asses, the CDCR hired the law office of Sean Musgrove of Rescue [sic] California that carried out unsolicited interviews with Solano’s foreign nationals. This clearly circumvents the law. CDCR officials can now claim that those forced to transfer did indeed consult with an attorney. The meetings were short, vague and ambiguous. According to Sophanareth Sok, “I was not told that we had a right, according to the law, to *private* counsel or a public defender who I would have preferred to speak with.”

These involuntary interviews were made mandatory by prison officials. Each foreign national was issued a

“Priority CDC-129/Inmate Pass” (known to prisoners as a “ducat”) making it mandatory to show up to see an attorney clearly working for the CDCR, not in the prisoner’s best interests. Those foreign nationals who received the unwanted passes were told if they did not show up for the pass, disciplinary action would be leveled against them, thus forcing them into the transfer scheme. The use of “priority passes” to coerce prisoners to meetings where they are to be prepared for illegal and possibly unconstitutional transfers is criminal.

On August 9, hundreds of foreign nationals were summoned to a meeting in one of Solano State Prison’s “chow halls” for a “meeting” with representatives from the Tallahatchie County Detention Facility in Tutwiler, Mississippi. These men of multiple nationalities — Cambodian, Mexican, Vietnamese, Chinese, Cuban, Laotian, Jamaican, Haitian, African and others — were forced to stand for hours in long lines outside, in close to hundred-degree weather, waiting to be forced fed a bunch of raw-hooey about how “wonderful” it would be when they got to the Mississippi prison.

According to a recent article in the Sacramento *Bee* by staff writer Andy Furillo, “CCPOA [the guard’s union] spokesman Ryan Sherman characterized the Tallahatchie County prison in Mississippi, operated by the Corrections Corp. of America, as one of the most troubled in the country.” There have been numerous articles detailing the disturbances at the prison dating back to 2003.

Sophanareth and many others want to know why foreign nationals were specifically targeted for these transfers. Like hundreds of others, Sophanareth has taken advantage of the programs available, immersing himself in an honest effort to do the right thing and to be prepared to live the proverbial productive life after release from prison.

The transfer of foreign nationals, the *only* group of prisoners targeted, is clearly discriminatory.

Sophanareth Sok has stepped up to the plate and filed a “Group Appeal” on behalf of dozens of foreign nationals who are vehemently objecting to these forced transfers.

Sophanareth’s contention is that rules have been violated and laws ignored by Gov. Schwarzenegger and prison officials in order to expedite these transfers.

The rush job being put on these transfers is an effort to dupe the public into believing that the CDCR and the governor’s office are doing something of substance to relieve overcrowding. This is nothing but spurious smoke-and-mirrors being used again by the arrogant, self-serving, pretentious flesh mongers of the CDCR to sell prisoners throughout the United States. State corrections officials signed a three-year, \$22.9 million con-

tract last year with Correctional Corporation of America (CCA), which also operates the private prisons housing California prisoners in Tennessee and Arizona.

Because of the tens of thousands of prisoners in countless county jails waiting for a prison bed, the bogus violating of ex-cons with no new charges, the lack of real attention toward rehabilitation by prison officials, obnoxious noise from the right-wing nut base, the malfeasance and incompetence coupled with the lack of stable leadership inherent throughout the prison system, and a long list of other reasons, these transfers will be for naught. The illegal transferring of “foreign nationals” as a commodity to private prisons throughout the United States is absurd and borders on lunacy.

Sophanareth Sok will continue his fight to try and stop his transfer. “It’s not only what is happening to me, it’s more about what it will do to my family after I’m shipped thousands of miles away,” he asserts.

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Boston Woodard is a prisoner/journalist serving his sentence in Solano State Prison. He wrote for the San Quentin News, The Soledad Star, and edited The Communicator. Prison officials have silenced all prisoner-written and -published newspapers in California.

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Previous articles by Boston Woodard:

“H O R R I F I E D “
<http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2007/08/19/18441509.php>

“Unacceptable Material”
<http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2007/06/08/18426088.php>

The Parole Conundrum
<http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/12/18/18338477.php>

The Ongoing Wave of Secrecy
<http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/11/06/18327039.php>

They Don’t Triple Bunk Dogs!
<http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/08/13/18297041.php>

Votes From Within
<http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/07/22/18290661.php>

Public/Media Access to the Prison System
<http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2005/04/11/17325871.php>

Women Prisoners Need Your Help

By Maria Telesco

’Tis the season – again. That time when we collect donations to provide a small Christmas /Year-End-Holidays gift to each of the more than 4,300 women imprisoned at Central California Women’s Facility (CCWF), Chowchilla. And, best of all, the project won’t cost you a dime. But it will enable you to put to good use, by re-cycling, those cute little soaps and shampoos you brought home from that quaint little hotel, and now can’t figure out what to do with.

Who are “we?” The CCWF Inmate Family Council; the Fresno Center for Nonviolence Prison Ministry; the Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian-Universalist Church of Fresno; and members of several other area churches, faith affiliations and organizations. We need:

- Travel or Sample Size
- Shampoo • Conditioner • Lotion • Soap • Body Wash • Bath Gel • Tooth Paste
- *****
- Regular Size Tooth Brushes
- *****
- All Kinds Of Greeting Cards:
- Christmas Cards • Blank-Inside Note Cards • Birthday • Get Well • Sympathy • English & Spanish Language Cards • Humorous • Religious
- Picture Post Cards (Without Stamps) • Stationery • Envelopes
- Authorized Food Items
- Each piece individually wrapped in paper, plastic or Mylar
- *** NO FOIL WRAPPING PERMITTED! ***
- Tea Bags • Hot Chocolate Packets • Individually Wrapped Hard Candies • Miniature Chocolate Bars
- Please * ONLY What Is On This List * Strict Prison Rules
- Donations of Money Also Needed. Checks may be made Payable to:
- FCNV Prison Ministry, Write “Chowchilla” in the “memo” Box
- Mail to Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno 93728
- Checks or Donations of Goods may also be dropped off at the
- Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno (South of McKinley)
- During staffed open hours M – F 11 – 3 (Call First 559-237-3223)
- Call Maria Telesco for Additional Information or to Pick Up Donations 559-255-9492
- All Donations Are Tax Deductible
- The Fresno Center for Nonviolence is a 501.c.3 Non-Profit Organization
- Federal Tax ID # 953238007 California State Tax ID # 1855871

Looking for “Justice” in the Criminal Justice System

Maria Telesco

Speaking about “Criminal Justice,” a teacher discussed prisons, prisoners, building (or not) more prisons, abuse of prisoners, deplorable lack of decent medical care, astronomical pay increases for some correctional employees. They came to a common word so vague, nobody could define it. The word was “justice.”

“Justice concerns the proper ordering of things and persons within a society. As a concept it has been subject to philosophical, legal and theological reflection and debate throughout history,” says Wikipedia. Retributive Justice, based on the *lex talionis* (law of retaliation), says punishment must equal the wrong suffered, i.e., “an eye for an eye.” This made sense 1,700 years before the Christian era; humans were nomadic, there were neither cities, nor permanent structures, to house offenders.



In ancient days, crime victims themselves punished wrongdoers. Civilization developed to where there were more people who lived in permanent settlements (cities), and they had governments. Leaders thought victims punished perpetrators excessively. So, in the interest of peace and fairness, governments assumed the job of punishment. That worked reasonably well. until 20th century America. Once again, the “Justice” system, in some cases, allows crime victims, or survivors of homicide victims, to choose the punishment, especially when it’s the death penalty.

All European countries, and most others, have abandoned the death penalty. They modernized prison systems, focusing on rehabilitation, not punishment. These changes have proven to work very well. Crime rates have diminished, and prisoners who are discharged or paroled have a very low recidivism rate.

Here in the USA, particularly California, legislators and prison officials, have turned 180 degrees from the European approach. Longer, tougher sentences; charging teenage kids, even pre-teens as adults, all to show voters they are “tough on crime.” They build more, bigger prisons and fill them up faster than you can say “Three Strikes.” Should there ever be a shortage of prisoners, they can just criminalize any ordinary behaviors, label them a “crime,” and produce an endless supply of convicts to fill them.

Our “Criminal Justice System” is criminal, but lacks justice. Even by historical standards our approach to treatment of prisoners is brutal. The process of deal-

ing with alleged criminals has been prostituted by “tough on crime” public officials who want to win points with voters. Police brutality, detectives fabricating evidence, crime lab technologists falsifying DNA test results to help the prosecution, prosecutors withholding exculpatory evidence. The list of wrongs is endless. Prisoners die from poor, or no, medical care. Hundreds of condemned prisoners are exonerated by DNA tests, while others die in horrifyingly botched executions. Cases are well documented in the media.

One definition of Justice is “fairness, with the absence of bias.” Religions preach to the faithful to follow the Golden Rule because it is “Just” : “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.” Some government leaders claim to be “godly men.” Their proclamations suggest they would like to turn our country into a theocracy. Yet their attitudes towards prisoners don’t display the universal religious values of love, compassion, and kindness. Instead they mock justice by spending millions on building prisons that sit empty because of understaffing; failing to provide even minimal health care to prisoners who need it most; imprisoning for life a man who stole a pizza. Disregarding the obvious religious and moral issues, wouldn’t it have cost less to buy that person a meal than to keep him in prison for decades? And, counterintuitively, they squander huge sums (exact amounts unavailable) constructing a fancy, brand new, de luxe, state of the art Execution Chamber, even though a virtual moratorium is in effect. Oh, but this is California, manufacturer of prisons, whose renewable crop is prisoners. And our definition of “justice” is “revenge.”

sunmt.org/sep24chron07.html

4 days of peace action in Fresno demanding Congress end Iraq war.

Bourne Identity pandemic

sunmt.org/bourne.html

sunmt.org/sep1chron07.html

200+ of us Move On peace at Nées/Blackstone

sunmt.org/aug29chron07.html

We medical workers organizing

Daily Iraq slaughter of

sunmt.org/dailydollar.html

Sponsoring organizations include but not limited to, California Prison Moratorium Project
Coalition of Women Prisoners, Center for Non Violence, Peace Fresno, National Network in Action, Families against Three Strikes,
All of Us or None, A New Way of Life, Grandmothers of the Light, Central California Environmental Network, Escuelas Si, Pintas No, Critical Resistance, Californians United for Responsible Budget,
Comité No Nos Vamos, and more

Uncaging the Valley: Women and Children in Prison Alley

**Why are we cutting funds for youth services?
And buying new police cars
Why are we spending less on education?
And funding Peeping Tom cameras in our communities
Why are we seeing fewer family services?
And seeing more police in our streets
Why are we expanding the Youth Jail?
To incarcerate kids whose parents aren't born yet?
Why are we expanding Fresno County's brand new jail?
And not implementing night court or less costly alternatives for non violent violators?**

Nowhere in the state is the move away from funding social services to pay for more prisons, jails, police, cameras, helicopters, special suppression teams, and ICE more dramatic than here in Prison Alley.

The costs and burdens of prison and jail expansion are being pushed
Primarily onto the Valley's women and children, attacking the family core
Come learn about what's happening: 53,000 new prison and jail beds. More ICE raids.
More youth expelled from school. And learn about what you can do about it. Meet activists and other concerned residents.
Let's stop planning a future of more kids in cages. Imagine a Valley without Prison Alley.
Cuts to education, mental health programs, job training, affordable housing, environmental justice to pay for more police, more prisons, more jails is everybody's problem.

Uncaging the Valley will feature topics in workshops on:

Translation Available
Guest Speakers, Topic Panel
Speakers
Spoken Word, Workshops,
Prison Nation Art Show Display by PowerPoint, Info/Organization Booths, Music, Food

Know Your Rights
Immigrant Rights, Detention and Deportation
Youth Justice
Racial Profiling
Gang Violence
3 Strikes
Women & Children Left Behind
Prison Expansion
Prison / Sentencing Reform
Mental Illness and Incarceration
Environmental Racism

**Saturday, Nov. 10th, 2007
9 am - 4 pm
Edison High School Cafeteria
540 E. California Ave., Fresno, CA 93706**

Tabling opportunities available
For More Information, call 559-266-5901 or email pmpvalle@sbcglobal.net.

Public Transportation Info: Fresno Area Transit Route Information 559-621-RIDE / 559-228-6280(TTY)
Bus Fare \$1.00 /Token .85 / children under 6 free/ seniors .35
FAX system map http://www.fresno.gov/NR/rdonlyres/DEF98FAE-E9B3-46CA-B67C-A75EAA7C640C/0/SYS_MAP.pdf

Thank You Fresno Center for Non Violence for sponsoring this ad

Nuclear Energy – Too Cheap to Meter? or an environmental catastrophe?

By David Weisman

It looks as though Fresno has made it through another sizzling scorcher of a summer in the Central Valley, and appears to have done so without experiencing any major loss of electrical power or brownouts. This must come as a surprise to John Hutson, president of Fresno Nuclear, who has stated that a new nuclear reactor in Fresno is vital to meet increasing summer air-conditioning needs. He joins a handful of highly paid lobbyists who have been prescribing nuclear power as a cure for summer's burn as glibly as if they were slathering on the sunblock. The good news is that sunblock *works*; the bad news is that nuclear power won't, and here's why:

Summer and higher temperatures mean greater demand for electricity, but in this respect nuclear power is the most vulnerable source of energy. Nuclear reactors demand a constant flow of cold water to keep their radioactive core cooled, and any disruption to that flow can cause a catastrophic upset. Here in the United States, two-thirds of the nuclear power plants are located on lakes and rivers, which provide this cooling water. However, as temperatures climb, so does the ambient temperature of the water. Last summer, nuclear plants were shut down in Michigan because the water wasn't cold enough, and plants in Minnesota, Illinois, Connecticut and Pennsylvania were "ramped down" to lower output for the same reason. The result: on days when their electricity was needed most, these nuclear plants couldn't meet the demand.

According to Hutson, Fresno will cool its reactor with the "gray" water from the city's wastewater treatment plant. *That* water is treated at ambient temperature and might require expensive cooling towers, which draw down the efficiency of the reactor — once again — during the very hot days when you would need it most. As reported earlier this summer in the Burlington Free Press, the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant was forced to reduce its power drastically after the collapse of a segment of one of its cooling towers:

The plant reduced power by 60 percent of its usual, 610-megawatt output, and that repairs "will take several days, at least," (NRC spokesman) Sheehan said. The power reduction comes during a time of year when demand is relatively heavy on the New England power grid.

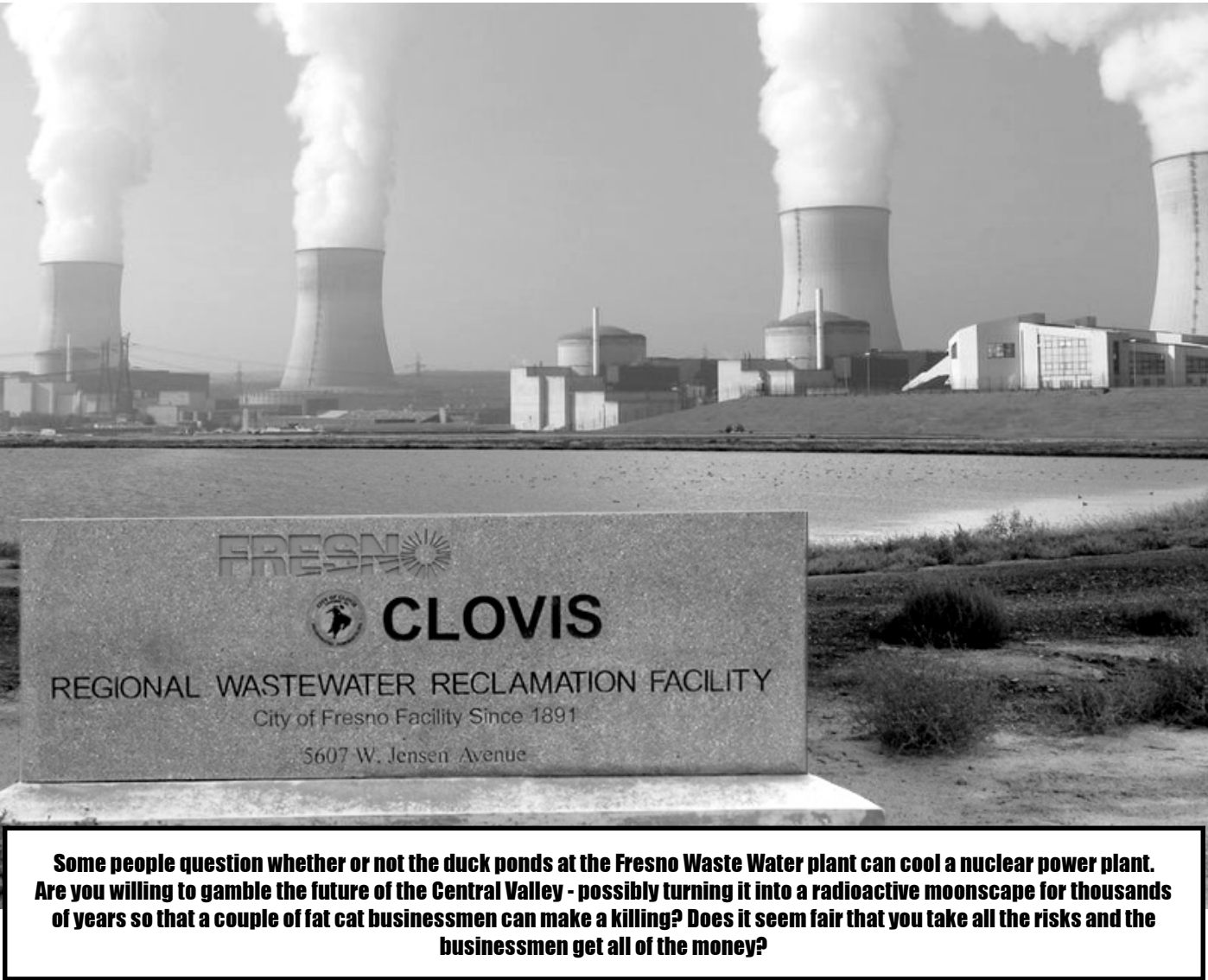
Some proponents of nuclear power in Fresno point to France as a success story, but as the *International Herald Tribune* reported in May 2007:

During the extreme heat of 2003 in France, 17 nuclear reactors operated at reduced capacity or were turned off. Electricite de France was forced to buy power from neighboring countries on the open market, where demand drove the price of a megawatt hour as high as 1,000, or \$1,350. Average prices in France during summer months ordinarily are about 95 per megawatt hour. The heat wave cost Electricite de France an extra 300 million....

Patrice Lambert de Diesbach, an energy analyst at CM-CIC Securities in Paris, said hot summers were the problem. "We are up against the maximum amount of hot water that can be released into rivers," Diesbach said. "Unfortunately the situation is only going to get worse."

In both Germany and Spain last summer, nuclear power plants had to reduce output for weeks or months after record high temperatures were recorded in the air *and* the vital rivers. As the *International Herald Tribune* reported, a spokeswoman for the German utility said, "We reckon there may be more heat waves in coming summers so we may have to reduce operations again." With water supply already a contentious issue in the Central Valley between agriculture, residents, and industry, will its use as cooling water for a power plant be the straw that breaks the camel's back?

Southern California didn't fare as well as Fresno during the summer heat wave, but were those power outages the result of a shortage of electricity? Not according to the officials responsible for our grid. As quoted by the A.P., Los Angeles Department of Water and Power spokeswoman Mary Anne Piersen said, "Probably more than 90 percent of them are due to stress on the system due to the heat," she said. "Different pieces of equipment get fatigued and blow out, so they have to be replaced." Lightning strikes on grid equipment due to scattered desert thunderstorms also were adding to the strain. Furthermore, Foxnews.com quotes "Stephanie McCorkle, spokeswoman for the California Independent System Operator, which manages the state's power grid. She said any outages Tuesday were



not the result of power shortages. "We're not predicting any shortfall," she said. "But conservation is always prudent." The problems appear to be related to aging infrastructure and transmission — *not* generation.

And as global warming kicks in, we are told to be wary of even longer and hotter summer heat waves. It makes the alternative of solar panels on your rooftop generating watts during those hot afternoons *when you need them most* seem much more sensible. Oddly enough, while global warming seems to pose a threat to nuclear power, it's the very argument some folks are using to launch an initiative campaign to overturn California's nuclear safeguard act — a 30 year old legislation that prevents new nuclear power plants from being built until the federal government has a demonstrated and approved method for the long-term disposal of deadly, high level radioactive waste. Thoughtfully, the Attorney General saw through this charade, and the title and summary of the initiative call it for what it really is: REMOVAL OF PROHIBITIONS ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS. Mr. Hutson and Fresno Nuclear need this ballot initiative to proceed with their plans, because the answer to the waste dilemma remains unresolved. But what will this cost Californians? Read a little further in the At-

torney General's fiscal analysis for the impact of this initiative:

Potential, unknown financial exposure to the state in the long term, potentially in the millions of dollars in environmental cleanup costs at each new nuclear power plant site, and potentially in the billions of dollars in the event of a major radioactive release.

Regardless of weather or season, there is one thing nuclear energy can be counted on to deliver: tons and tons of high level radioactive waste, a by-product so lethal that its most hazardous components must be shielded from the biosphere for up to a quarter of a million years. Currently, 77,000 tons of the noxious stuff is stored on our lakes, rivers and shores. Here in California, the waste is stored on our fragile and seismically active coastline. Not worried about an earthquake in Fresno? Bear in mind, the quake that rocked the Kashiwazaki nuclear plant in Japan this past July was on a previously unknown fault, and registered a magnitude greater than the design integrity of that plant — which, along with its 7000 megawatts of generation, has been shut indefinitely. While the amount of radioactive fallout has still not been tallied, the economic fallout was immediately apparent, as reported in the Japanese press:

According to the tourism office, sales at beach houses equipped with lodging facilities in the city are about 10 percent of those in a normal year. Even though there was no damage to the facilities from the quake, they suffered massive cancellations, with roughly 80 percent of the tourists citing concerns over a radiation leak.

And so, as summer ends, we find ourselves at the fifty-third anniversary of the day (September 16th, 1954) that Atomic Energy Commission chairman Lewis Strauss, in a speech before the National Association of Science Writers, uttered these now infamous words: "It is not too much to expect that our children will enjoy in their homes electrical energy too cheap to meter...."

Nuclear power, as an industry, has had *fifty* years to prove itself economical, reliable and safe. If it were, it would have been long established and competing successfully in the market by now, rather than attempting to milk taxpayer subsidies for its revival.

Readers should be aware that the current energy bill awaiting resolution in congress would give the nuclear industry \$ 50 billion dollars in one hun-

dred percent guaranteed loans — an amount that dwarfs all subsidies to renewable and alternative energy. Citizens concerned about this should let their senate and congressional representatives know that these subsidies are a tax we can't afford. At the same time, state residents should let their assembly members and senators know that they support AB 1632, the bill that mandates our California Energy Commission (CEC) to do a top-to-bottom full cost/risk/benefit analysis of whether California should continue to rely on its aging nuclear plants into the future, let alone re-license them or build new ones. Until the CEC has crunched the numbers on the affordability of this "too cheap to meter" energy, we should proceed with caution. Visitors to the web site of the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility (www.a4nr.org) can find a clearinghouse of information and action items on this issue.

When the summer sun blazes down on the Golden State, let Californian's gaze skyward and plan a future based on solar and other sources of renewable energy. It will help us to all stay cool and *be* cool at the same time. And don't forget the sunblock!

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David Weisman is a media activist and the outreach coordinator for the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility www.a4nr.org . He can be contacted at: davidweisman@charter.net



Red Ribbon AIDS Walk - October 6

By Francine Ramos

In early October, Red Ribbon Project will be having its second Annual Aids Walk Fresno. The event will take place at Roeding Park under the Umbrella Grove. No need to fret my fellow Fresnans, despite recent concerns regarding Red Ribbon Projects affiliation with Cornerstone Church, there will be no superpower laser beams changing one’s sexual orientation to fit anyone’s agenda.

First off, let us clear up some vital information regarding the walk and some comments that were written by Mr. Waterhouse (see the September issue of the Community Alliance, pg 9). First, Walk for Life is a walk which is held for the celebration of life, hence anti-abortion. Its main focus is to help promote life and end abortion. Walk for life has nothing to do with AIDS. Second, the Mother’s Day run was last held in 2003. This was an event that promoted HIV Awareness and was a walk/run. It also went under the name “Run for all Walks of Life”. The cool thing about this event was that huge trophies were given to the marathon runner/winner and they had runs for all ages.

The event originally started as a memorial to John Huffman who lost his battle with AIDS in 1991. His family held the event yearly to honor not only John Huffman but also those that passed away from complications due to AIDS. Eventually there was not enough participants and the Mother’s Day Run held its last event in 2003.

Lastly, Daniel’s Angels is not an ex-gay ministry. Daniel’s Angels is a team made up of friends and some family members Mendoza explained. Several of Daniel’s friends and family wanted a team to walk in last year’s first AIDS Walk held at Woodward Park. After they were unable to agree on a team name, they decided on opting with Daniel’s first name and choosing Angel’s to mimic a famous 80’s television show that turned into a 2000 Hollywood blockbuster film.

Around three years ago, Daniel Mendoza 31, saw that there was a need within the AIDS community. After serving on several committees and agencies that assisted those living with HIV/AIDS in Fresno, he saw a financial cutback in funding that provided money to several of these organizations. So he decided to take matters into his own hands. Like the many other organizations in Fresno that raise awareness for those living with the disease, Mendoza began to fundraise. Mendoza has also been HIV positive since the late 90’s, so his desire to assist the HIV/AIDS community was also a personal one. He began having carwashes and was one in a group of eight that raised enough money to build a memorial for those that passed away from AIDS in Fresno County. The memorial still stands today and can be seen on the north side wall in The Living Room.

“My initial hope for Red Ribbon AIDS Walk is to unite all people from all walks of life. I want it to be that Healthy Bridge that includes all communities, straight or gay, black or brown. When I think of AIDS Walk and what I want it to represent, I think of my mother’s love. My mother’s love for me when she found out I was

positive, you know it was unconditional. I would hope that when people choose to participate they would understand that I judge no one. Everyone is welcome,” said Mendoza.

Mendoza considers himself under the category of ex-gay and is also a Christian. He has been a Christian attending Cornerstone Church for a little over three years. It is that aspect of Red Ribbon AIDS Walk that has some from the LGBTQ communities unreceptive to the AIDS Walk.

“I fully understand the reason that several people from the gay community have an issue with AIDS Walk due to Cornerstone’s involvement and the church’s stand on those issues. I really want AIDS Walk to be different. This is not an event to try and change anyone from being gay to straight or straight to gay. This is an AIDS Walk. It is simply what it says it is, A Walk to raise awareness and help those living with HIV/AIDS,” said Mendoza.

James Nicacio, 38 is director of WE-Care an agency that provides referral services to those that are positive in Fresno County. Nicacio is also a part of the gay community and says that he has no problem participating in this year’s event.

“AIDS is not a gay issue, point blank. It is not about being gay. What people need to realize is that AIDS has many faces and it affects people from all walks of life. AIDS Walk Fresno needs to be supported because what it is promoting is awareness to all communities gay and straight,” said Nicacio.

Nicacio who has lived in West Hollywood and San Francisco has seen events like this before. Although, those events were usually produced by organizations other than the church, he still believes that should not play a role in whether one attends or not.

We-Care Fresno not only has a team ready and willing to walk the 3 mile walk. They also will have a booth that will promote and share information about We-Care to anyone who needs information. Nicacio said that RED Ribbon AIDS Walk is allowing We-Care Fresno to keep 70% of all profits made from items sold at their booth. Nicacio said that this is just a win -win situation. On one hand he gets to participate in raising awareness and possibly making one person think twice about the virus by walking side by side with those walking in the AIDS Walk Fresno. Second, he also gets to promote We-Care to those that will be present, raise money and keep more than half of it for upcoming events that We-Care organizes.

“I accept everyone for who they are. I would hope that the same could be said for me, accept me for who I am. I can’t change anyone, but together we can help those living with HIV. We can tear down the walls of separation together,” said Mendoza.

All funds raised through Red Ribbon AIDS Walk are used to assist those living with the virus in Fresno. For more information and for those interested in participating you can log on to www.aidswalkfresno.org or call 445-walk.

Red Ribbon Project’s 2nd Annual AIDS Walk

October 6, 2007 9:00 am- 1:00pm

Roeding Park under the Umbrella Grove

off Olive/Belmont near the Tower District

Help raise awareness for HIV/AIDS in Fresno County

Musical Guests:

Shabac

Singer David Mendoza

Melissa Savala

D.J. Loraine

As well as many others

Speakers:

Pastor Jim Franklin

Daniel Mendoza

As well as several others

There will be a releasing of Red Balloons in memorial to those that lost their life from AIDS

Team rewards, all teams will be photographed

Several booths from Fresno will be selling items and promoting their organizations.

It’s not too late to join in.



QUEER EYE

Lawyer Says Fresno Sheriff's Department Violates RICO Act

by Dan Waterhouse

A civil rights lawsuit filed in federal District Court in Fresno alleges that the Fresno County Sheriff's Department engages in a "pattern of racketeering activities... involving completing and filing false police reports and committing perjury...."

Bay Area attorney Bruce Nickerson said in the class action complaint that "the defendants repeatedly, arbitrarily, unlawfully, and maliciously made false arrests of plaintiffs" and other men, violating their "right to freedom of speech, expression, association, and their right to equal protection under the law" in the Sheriff's pursuit of gay men at Roeding Park.

Nickerson alleges that the "pattern and practice of racketeering activities also included numerous acts of tampering with witnesses and victims and retaliating against witnesses and victims."

Named in the complaint are the County of Fresno, former Sheriff Richard Pierce, and five deputy sheriffs.

Nickerson filed the suit on behalf of Martin Coldwell and another man, identified in the complaint as "Doe 1," in early August. Both men were arrested during the park bathroom sex stings in 2002. The Sheriff's Department initiated the sting after Fresno police said their department placed a higher priority on dealing with violent crime. Dozens of men were arrested, many while minicams rolled.

Nickerson added, "There are hundreds of men who have been illegally arrested" by the Sheriff's Department "because they were perceived to be interested in meeting in public," men interested in dating other men. He said the lawsuit was filed on their behalf.

The lawsuit also alleges that Pierce and Sergeant Rick Ko targeted areas believed to be frequented by queers for the "purpose of harassing these men and interfering with their rights of speech, privacy, expression, association and equal protection." He said Pierce and Ko had deputies "approach men, undercover, for the purpose of discussing, suggesting, or implying a willingness to engage in sexual or other intimate activity," then "falsely arresting men without warrants or probably cause and accusing them of engaging in criminal activity even though no criminal activity was engaged in."

Nickerson said the Sheriff's Department had criminalized the activity of men "hitting" on other men, which isn't a crime in California according to Nickerson. A three-judge panel agreed with Nickerson late last year. At the time, Nickerson said, "The trial court said a sexual solicitation made in a public place is breaking the law — and it's not. If it was, then any guy who said, 'Hey baby, let's get it on' would be acting illegally."

Nickerson said the Sheriff's Department targeted these men solely because of their gender and perceived sexual orientation, and publicized their arrests, all with the

"unconstitutional and illegal goal of reducing the number of men" seeking sexual or other intimate association "from meeting one another in public places in Fresno particularly the public parks."

According to the complaint, Coldwell was visiting Roeding Park on July 31, 2002, when he encountered a man who turned out to be an undercover deputy. According to Nickerson, Coldwell and the man chatted briefly, and Coldwell commented that "the park was frequented by law enforcement who would target men who were chatting with other men, but would ignore men who were chatting with women."

Nickerson says in the complaint that the undercover officer took down Coldwell's car license number and relayed it to other deputies in the park. He also says the deputy "wrote a police report in which he falsely stated that Coldwell unzipped his pants and asked the deputy to 'feel his penis'." According to Nickerson, Coldwell did not unzip his pants or make any sexual request.

Coldwell, according to Nickerson, was arrested at his home two and a half months later by sheriff's deputies "who had notified the media of the upcoming arrest."

All charges against Coldwell were dismissed on August 8, 2006.

Nickerson alleges that many other men "were similarly arrested with the media present. This was designed to inflict maximum humiliation, mental anguish, and emotional distress" on the men.

Nickerson is seeking a declaratory judgment that the Sheriff's Department actions violate the U.S. Constitution; a permanent injunction barring the Sheriff's Department from "targeting, harassing, and/or arresting men" for seeking sex in public and barring the department from enforcing laws in a discriminatory manner against men; compensatory damages; and triple damages under the Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organization Act.

GRATITUDE BOX

(FOR THE MANY PEOPLE MOR WANTS TO THANK, INCLUDING SOME SHE TRIED TO CALL IN BUT I DIDN'T GET RECORDED.)

The Xiong Family: parents, Cher, Sue, Pamela, Ze, Bee, Yeng, Vang
Jesse Avila
Steve Malm
Dr. Roger Simpson
Dr. Richard Salsgiver
Dr. Jane Yamaguchi
Dr. Richard Rithaporn
Dr. John Franz
Those who have made donations and offered support



IDENTITY BOX

Name – Mor Chang
Birthplace – Laos
Primary identity – Hmong
Religious affiliation – Catholic
Most frequented part of Fresno – Northeast
Inspirations – Mother Teresa, Pope John Paul II
Motto – "Family is first"
Other involvements – volunteer at church (including as as music director), hosting TV show
Unexpected pleasure – hiking

Grassroots Profile

By Richard Stone

Mor Chang is a woman with a mission. One of Fresno's numerous Hmong refugees from Laos, she arrived in the U.S. with her family at the age of 12. Those of us who saw the recently-screened film "Secret Wars" know the background story of how the Hmong — an agrarian, fiercely independent people living in isolated regions of Laos and Viet Nam — were recruited into the U. S. war with the Communists of North Viet Nam. But most Americans have no idea why Hmong refugees living mostly in Thai refugee camps were given special access to immigration, nor can most of us imagine the circumstances these new Americans faced in moving from an homogeneous, unmechanized culture to the diverse, technologically sophisticated culture of the U.S.

Mor lived through this transition, where women accustomed to cooking on open fires were confronted with the mysteries of stoves; where men accustomed to supporting their families by hard physical labor were forced to accept welfare checks and to cede authority to their children who could explain what was needed for them to file their papers.

In a state of pronounced cultural and spiritual confusion, Mor says she left the chaos of her own family for an early marriage, which produced five children before itself dissolving. To her great

fortune, she was brought to a new church and faith that gave her a new starting point. She found the strength and wisdom to raise her children and to succeed in a Masters program at CSUF.

But the uprooting of the Hmong culture still has impact on her life. Mor sees disorientation and pain prevalent in her community: domestic violence and failing marriages; conflicts around traditions of religion, health care, and education; intergenerational tensions and young people gravitating toward gangs. So Mor has taken on the imposing task of establishing a community counseling center for the Southeast Asian population, to help her brethren bridge the cultural gap.

Mor's vision is founded on the desire to provide caring listeners able to converse in the clients' native tongue, and to assist with "strength-based counseling." "This means we look to the cultural roots of our clients and see how these can be used in this new environment. We want our people to have pride in their ancestry and values, as well as looking at new opportunities afforded by their adopted home. We want them to have 'cultural competency,' to understand the language and practices of the people around them, to not be afraid of the new and different. We want to help the generations communicate and respect each other."

With the guidance and assistance of many (see box), Mor has established a nonprofit corporation, Healing Hope Inc. She has assembled a board of direc-

tors and a group of volunteers to staff the proposed facility. She is well along the path to establishing federal tax-exempt status.

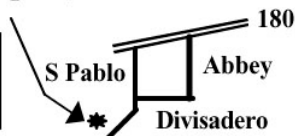
Mor has already begun doing outreach, especially as host of a Hmong-language TV show on channel 49 (the station of the Catholic diocese), and through her church, Our Lady of Victory (at Palm and West). Now she is in the midst of fundraising and grant writing. Anyone willing to assist financially with this endeavor can send a check to the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, with memo for Healing Hope, as the Center is acting as Healing Hope's fiscal agent.

Mor and her colleagues are in uncharted territory as they step forward as professionals, addressing the highly problematic issues of cultural identity in a fractured world. We wish them stamina, ingenuity and courage... and the financial backing they both need and deserve.

QUAKERS

FRESNO FRIENDS MEETING
Silent Worship Sunday 10-11 AM
2219 San Joaquin, Fresno
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ALL
WELCOME



The Dream of a Non-capitalistic Approach to Medicine: The Cuban Model

(part two of a two-part series on Cuba)

by Gerry Bill

Imagine a world in which people were willing to enter the field of medicine for the sheer pleasure derived from helping people meet their medical needs, with no expectation that they would ever be making the big bucks. In fact, imagine that an individual could make far more money waiting tables in a restaurant, without having to bother with six years of medical school, yet he or she still chooses medicine as a career. Imagine, in other words, that medical professionals saw themselves essentially as volunteer servants of their communities, rather than as engaged in a profession destined to bring them significant financial rewards. In short, imagine medicine with its capitalistic elements removed.

Well, you may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I'm sure you recognize that as a John Lennon quote, but it might surprise you to learn that the quote has become a part of Cuban culture. As a sign of respect for Lennon, the quote is etched into the concrete in front of a statue of him in a park in central Havana. The Cuban Revolution itself was carried out by dreamers, and that concept is still alive and well among the population.

This all relates to the Cuban medical system in a very direct way. The Cuban medical system is based on having dreams—big dreams—and then making them come true. Cuba's work in the area of medicine is perhaps the most brilliant example of positive changes brought to the island by the Cuban Revolution.

When I visited Cuba with Pastors for Peace in July of this year it was the medical system, and particularly medical education, that most impressed me. Let me tell you about the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM in Spanish). Cuba has 21 medical schools, but this particular one focuses on training students from all around the world—all free of charge, of course.

During our visit to Cuba our group had the privilege of visiting ELAM, touring the facility, meeting some of the 10,000 students at the school (one of the US students even rode back to Texas with us on the Pastors for Peace bus). Our group had the even bigger privilege of attending ELAM's commencement ceremonies and meeting some of the 2,200 members of the graduating class. They came from 27 different countries, including eight graduates from the US.

As you can see from the number of graduates, this is a huge operation—but it is not just the scale that is impressive. Even more impressive is the attitude of the students. I guess you could say we witnessed the graduation of 2,200 dreamers. ELAM's six-year program is not just about training people in the skills necessary to function as a doctor, a dentist or a nurse—although it does a world-class job in that regard. But the curriculum is also about the philosophy of service to one's fellow human beings. It isn't like there is a class that focuses on that philosophy; rather, the belief in service is built into classes across the curriculum, and is part of what motivates the faculty as well. Meeting with the graduates one can sense their excitement as they are about to begin on a lifetime of service. It is a bit like being around a large group of enthusiastic Peace Corps volunteers about to embark on their missions. Service is what brings meaning to their lives, not monetary gain.

Perhaps it is not surprising that ELAM students would have such a philosophy. The recruitment process is designed to bring in students with exactly that point of view. While the cost of the medical education (including books, living expenses, etc.) are all borne by the Cuban government, students who apply must promise something in return. They must promise to practice in underserved communities. In many cases, this would mean returning to their own neighborhoods. The majority of the students are recruited from underserved communities—from poor, remote, marginalized and indigenous populations. They enter the institution with the goal of serving people like themselves. It is no wonder the philosophy of service prevails.

The surprising thing to those of us raised with more capitalistic mentalities is that all of this works, and works quite well. I remember being taught as a school kid that



Cuba's work in the area of medicine is perhaps the most brilliant example of positive changes brought to the island by the Cuban Revolution. These doctors have just graduated from the Latin American School of Medicine in Cuba. Both photos on this page are by Simone Whalen-Rhodes

the reason we need to pay doctors so well in this country is as a kind of reward for their hard work of making it through medical school. If people could not make a better than average living as doctors, the argument goes, no one would enter the field because it is such difficult work and it takes so long to get prepared for it.

That idea turns out to be a myth. In Cuba, doctors really



The infant mortality rate in Latin America and the rest of the Caribbean is 22 per 1,000 births; in the US that number is 7, and in Cuba it is 5.3. The life expectancy in Cuba is approximately eight years longer than in Latin America and the Caribbean, and virtually the same as in the US.

do make substantially less than waiters and other workers involved in the tourist industry, and no higher education is needed for those kinds of jobs. Despite that, Cuba's medical schools have more applicants than they can handle from among the Cuban population. They have to turn people away. Why would this be? It is because a lot of people like the idea of being doctors. The profession itself appeals to them, and no other reward is needed beyond an adequate, more or less average Cuban wage. I guess they aren't thinking like capitalists; they are thinking more like dreamers.

Of course, one thing that makes becoming a doctor in Cuba easier is that medical education, like all higher education, is free. One has only to focus on meeting the academic requirements for a medical education and does not have to worry about how to pay for it. What would medicine be like in our country if medical education were free to anyone who can qualify academically? As you can see, we are talking about a completely different, non-capitalistic paradigm in Cuba, and in the field of medicine, it is definitely working.

Evidence that it is working abounds. In terms of service to other countries, Cuba has sent over 100,000 health professionals abroad since 1960 to serve in 101 countries around the globe. Currently, Cuba has medical professionals, mostly doctors, serving in 68 countries. Over 100 countries now have government-to-government agreements providing for the sustained presence of health professionals in those countries, and Cuba is currently training 22,000 medical students from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. It is often said that Cuba's biggest export is medical professionals and medical education, and you can see why.

Within Cuba itself the record is even more impressive.

At the time of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 there were about 6,000 doctors in Cuba. About half of those doctors left after the revolution, leaving only 3,000. Now, however, Cuba has over 70,000 doctors—a rate of 62.7 doctors per 10,000 population. For comparison, the US and Europe average around 30 doctors per 10,000 people, whereas countries in the developing world typically have about 10 doctors for every 10,000 inhabitants.

The number of doctors is, of course, just one measure of success. Even more telling are the health statistics. The infant mortality rate in Latin America and the rest of the Caribbean is 22 per 1,000 births; in the US that number is 7, and in Cuba it is 5.3. The life expectancy in Cuba is approximately eight years longer than in Latin America and the Caribbean, and virtually the same as in the US.

There have been similar successes abroad where significant numbers of Cuban doctors have gone and served other countries. In the Gambia, for example, the infant mortality rate dropped from 121 to 61 between 1999 and 2003, largely thanks to the Cuban presence. Even more impressive, some remote regions of Guatemala saw their infant mortality rate drop from 45 to 16.8 after the Cuban doctors went there. It is clear that we, as humans, have the knowhow to dramatically reduce human suffering and premature deaths around the

world, but we somehow lack the political will to make that happen. Cuba, however, is having a big impact around the globe—far out of proportion to the size of the tiny island nation.

Within Cuba, a major factor contributing to Cuba's good health statistics is accessibility of medical care. In Cuba, 98.3% of the population live where they have access to a neighborhood doctor or nurse. I have seen this firsthand in both of my visits to Cuba. In both cases, a member of our group needed some medical attention, and the doctor was literally just around the corner, living above a clinic, and essentially available to the neighborhood 24/7. Would doctors in the US accept working conditions like that? Cuban doctors do, and they seem not to mind. After all, it is their friends and neighbors they are looking after. They even make house calls in the neighborhood. They don't get paid any extra for doing that; they just do it because it is an accepted part of the job, and because they care about their neighbors.

Cuba shows us what the practice of medicine looks like when people matter more than dollars. It flies in the face of everything we have been taught about what motivates people to take on difficult jobs, but somehow it works anyway, and works well. It is no wonder our government does not want us to go to Cuba; they don't want us to see how well an alternative model can work.

Cuba's system was designed by dreamers, but it is no longer a dream. I wonder what it would be like if some visionary dreamers like that were in charge in our own country?

Think about it.

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Gerry Bill is a Sociology and American Studies Instructor at Fresno City College, Treasurer of the Fresno Free College Foundation/KFCF, and Center Director of the Fresno Center for Nonviolence. He can be contacted by email at gerry.bill@gmail.com

Cuba: Myth and Reality

**Sunday, October 7th
2 - 4 pm**

A report back to the community by Fresnans who went to Cuba this summer with Pastors for Peace and the Venceremos Brigade. Presenters will include Gerry Bill, Tony Bracamonte, and Simone Whalen-Rhodes. The presentation will include pictures, slides, and personal experiences. This event will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno, 2672 E. Alluvial.

A Century of Mind Control

by Gerry Bill

Implications for our lives in the 21st Century
A four-week miniseries in October at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence

Sigmund Freud has affected us far more than we know, and probably much more than he thought he would. I am not referring primarily to the development of psychotherapy and to people who spend hundreds of hours and tens of thousands of dollars as patients of psychoanalysts. I am referring to all the rest of us who are affected as citizens, as consumers, even as soldiers.

Early in the Twentieth Century the insights of Freud and others into the inner workings of the human psyche began to be studied and then applied by those whose business it was to manipulate the masses. I am speaking of the propagandists—political spin meisters and the Madison Avenue promoters of corporate interests. It turns out that the practices of political propaganda and commercial advertising were given huge boosts by the development of modern psychology. As the psychologists delved deeper and deeper into our psyches they learned how to tap into some of our primal instincts. With this knowledge the propagandists and advertisers learned to bypass the filters of reason and even the conscious mind itself and began to appeal directly to our inner drives.

The results have been phenomenal—phenomenally good if you are in public relations or advertising, but arguably very bad if you are part of the ordinary public. For we, the public, are the ones who are being manipulated by this industry—and most of the time we don't even know it.

There will be a four-week miniseries on this topic at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, beginning on October 8th and continuing for four Mondays in a row, 7-8:30 p.m. The miniseries will be based on "The Century of the Self," a film that traces the evolution of the propaganda industry from the days of Freud until the present. Each of the four evenings we will begin with a one-hour segment of the film, followed by thirty minutes of discussion.

The Center is located at 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. The series is free and open to anyone interested. For more information contact Gerry Bill at 227-2133.

Word On The Street

by Wendy Russell

I was going to bust it wide open, exposed for all to see. What if the arrests of the Hmong generals - quite elderly gentlemen, in their golden twilight years and all venerated by their communities - on charges about somehow trying to overthrow the faraway government of Laos, was *really* about our own government kissing someone's somewhere to gain something — maybe something like an army base closer to China?

I wanted just two more days to actually find the word on the streets of the Hmong community that might refute, explain or collaborate it all - so I called my editor here at Community Alliance, Mike Rhodes, to ask for more time. His phone was answered with Bob Marley's classic 'Downpresser Man,' "...*where you gonna run to? Ohhhh, on that day...*" and I liked that - being a 'roots reggae' woman and often hoping that bad people will face retribution and judgment - but when he answered, I heard such anguish in his voice that I stopped in my tracks.

Mike said that he was downtown at the homeless camp (next to the railroad tracks south of Ventura, around 'G' and 'H' streets, near to and under the cement overpasses of 168, 180 and 41) and that some homes - tents actually - had just been slashed open and torn down by railroad security. He had just arrived and was being told what had immediately transpired and he was in pain. I heard it loud and clear through the cell phone. I could hear excited, angry voices - voices with respect and hope in their timbre too; the speakers thought Mike could do something about it and my heart sank, ever-so-briefly, feeling the heavy weight of that. What a tireless soldier for Good he is! I decided right then that instead, this month's Question would be: *What should the City of Fresno do to help the homeless?*

Later, about 4:15pm that same day, I drove to that homeless encampment, a sprawling patchwork of rag-tag tents, tarps, plastic sheeting, old signs, canvas banners and other stuff made into homes, some attached to the cyclone fencing lining the streets and others free-standing, perched here and there under the massive overpasses and concrete ramps. The continuous sounds of steady traffic thundered overhead. People sat in lawn chairs together, some sat on old couches and homemade benches next to tents and others leaned against abandoned freeway railings on a freeway where no cars go. Over 200 people live here, plus I saw a steady stream of other people coming from every direction, all aiming for the same place; to get in a line of people outside a big building south of me and across the street from the camps. I felt invisible and in-the-way as the

exodus headed to that line leading to a warm meal and a safe bed - but only to a certain number of people and then the doors shut for the night - thus the intent strides of the walkers around me. But I did get a man to stop and answer this month's Question. He said to give his name as PISSED OFF:



Pissed Off

"We don't want to be homeless! We - I don't want to sleep in a place with so many rules just to eat. I am in pain every second of every day and every night and I need drugs. Why don't I just get my pain meds easy? All I want? Then I wouldn't have to beg for money or whatever to buy drugs and alcohol just so I don't hurt for a few hours - damn it - what do they care? I'm just trash to them!"

I asked him who "they" were. The city of Fresno? He was edging away but he continued, "The doctors! The police! I need drugs. I am in constant pain and I have no money so I have to beg. The police say not to bother people but I need money. I need alcohol. It's gonna rain - look at those clouds, big crowds of cumulus clouds - I need money."

When I asked to take his photo, his face got even more angry as he said; "I'm just trash. Take a picture of that trash and call it Me" pointing to the trash caught against the fence. He would not budge about showing his face to my camera, so we took the picture his way. Then I

left him but the poetry of his words, 'those clouds, big crowds of cumulus clouds' stays in my mind.

The next day I head to the Tower District looking for a homeless man who, each night, (I'd been told), chains his wheelchair to an immovable object like a newspaper stand or metal fencing, so that he can sleep in peace. I never did find him, but I did find 48 year old MATTHEW. He said he is not homeless because he sleeps on the grassy lot next to the Church every night - but that he could answer this month's Question:

"I've known homeless people. Some people choose to be homeless. Police don't bother them usually, it depends on what they do. Drugging? Drinking...?" Matthew is tall and has kind, gentle eyes. He is thoughtful and chooses his words carefully, pausing frequently. I repeat the Question: *What should the City of Fresno do to help the homeless?*

Matthew looks down at his white zories and continues, "I don't know. I've been struggling with that myself. More clinics. Medicinal marijuana. Dollar Tree -" (he points to the store's sign we stand in front of), "- is good. More 99 cent stores and thrift stores to help us buy stuff for cheaper. More places like Heart House - their motto is '*Home is where the heart lives - come home to the Heart.*'"



Matthew

A Century of Mind Control

Implications for our lives in the 21st Century

Four-week miniseries at the Fresno Center For Nonviolence

October 8, 15, 22, 29

7-8:30 p.m.

Based on the film "The Century of the Self"

It had rained in the night. There had been nothing in the Bee about the homeless peoples’ tents getting slashed. Driving away from the Tower District on Broadway heading towards downtown, I see a woman pushing a small shopping cart along the sidewalk, also on her way south. She flashes me a big smile, encouraging me to flip a U-turn and park. When I ask for her name, first she said to call her A FRIENDLY CHARACTER, and then she answers our Question: *What should the City of Fresno do to help the homeless?*

“Buy big houses like this one,” she gestured to the three story, gracefully-aged Victorian on the street corner behind us, “and let the homeless in and have warm food for them. I was homeless before but I’m not now,” she gives me a strong clear gaze and continues, “A lot of people are homeless because they are on drugs or alcohol. They want to be homeless, but I never wanted to be homeless - I didn’t like it - I was mentally and physically abused by my ex-boyfriend then, but somebody nice helped me and I got away.”



A Friendly Character

She did not want me to mention the ex boyfriend’s abuse at first, but I told her maybe she could help other women if we could print her story, so she agreed. She then adds, “I help a lot of people; I tell them, ‘Don’t let a guy abuse you!’ and ‘Once an abuser, always an abuser.’ The City could have more meetings. People should go to meetings like at the YMCA - I was there - I *know* it was a good program.” Here she stops herself, then says, “But would people go?” She pauses... then continues, “They need rules... I quit 12 years ago... I live around druggies now, but I promised to God *never again!*”

As we parted ways she told me she also volunteered once or twice a week at the ARPS, “stamping and licking envelopes” and she told me her real name, “Just for you, though.”

Next I stop at the southeast corner of Shaw and Blackstone streets, where CRAWDAD often stands hold-



Crawdad

ing his sign, to get his answer to the Question: *What should the City of Fresno do to help the homeless?*

“More private housing for the homeless. The City is wasting empty motels and buildings. Stop being so strict - I understand the rules about if you are drunk or under the influence - but the rules about having an I.D. and a tetanus shot before you can stay - it’s like a prison. The people that run the place run it like a prison.” He was talking about the Rescue Mission.

Sprinkled rain spots us between sun rays and blue skies as 51 year-old Crawdad tells me that he is “still looking for a woman to show me love, to show me the way to heaven. I’m ready to turn my life over!” Next Crawdad says that the people driving by sometimes say to get a job and “I ask them would you give me a job? -And they say no! I’ll be out here all day and only make a few dollars. I don’t blame people - they’re tired of looking at me... I understand - it’s the middle of the month... but don’t just drive by saying ‘Get a job!’ {Instead} Give me a job! Make more jobs for the people out here!” Crawdad next shares his observations on who gives and who does not give money, and then he thanked me for stopping, saying that he wished more people would “just stop and talk.”

Really, I did not make this up nor plan it, but the very next person I speak to - after I left CRAWDAD at Blackstone and Shaw streets - is FISH, sitting in his wheelchair, parked near the going-south exit ramp at Herndon and 41, and isn’t that a perfect fit of at least these two tiny pieces on that cosmic puzzle that is Life - fitting perfectly, sure, but (again!) the why of it escapes me - but I do see that I am here to ask FISH this month’s Question: *What should the City of Fresno do to help the homeless?*

“The City of Fresno spends \$60,000. for a Christmas Tree.” Fish pauses and then adds, “Take it from *there*. Look at *that*. It was frost time, cold outside... it was a female police officer stationed at the Ted C. Wills’ warming center last year and I was there to keep warm when she told me that. *She* said it was a shame to do it like that!” Fish circles around with his finger in the air, “Shucks! Starting to get cold and I don’t have a jacket. We need coats. And private lockers or something - my stuff has been stolen five times. We need more medical care, more clinics, more compassionate doctors. The last doctor I saw, said he’d see me in two years; I saw darkness in that guys’ eyes.” Standing next to his wheelchair now, he rolled up his pant leg to show me the scars and point out where pins were, inside. He begins another subject, “Some police have a heart, but some say I’m begging - I’m not! Here’s my sign...” and he shows it to me; ‘*I need a Blessing today through Jesus*’ it reads. Fish continues, “I’m a commercial fisherman. I come from



Fish

Hawaii. It’s a long story how I got to California but here I met my sweetie. I am so grateful for her ... how compatible, how comfortable; Sara, my soul mate - she pushes me on to be good. God gave her to me!”

I can see that Fish seems content in this life he has - even without a jacket. ‘God’s will’ and ‘Jesus’ come up often. He wears a shark’s tooth on a cord around his neck and his blue jeans and shirt are clean. He finishes up with, “The City is good already, they come around and hand you bags of food, clothes, blankets - but *you* got to do the footwork!” He repeats, “... you got to do the footwork!”

He gives me a big hug when we part ways. As I walk to my car I look up. It may rain - just look at “those clouds, big crowds of cumulus clouds...” which leads my thoughts to rain coats, then to ‘Pissed Off’ and the people in those slashed-then-patched tents downtown, to Matthew sleeping at his home on the lawn, then back to Fish having no jacket, which directs my thinking to our move to Costa Rica in - what, three months? Coats? I’ll be living in the mountains of a tropical rain forest! Wow. I forgot the perfect weather, yet another aspect of Our Big Move. I will start on the coat closets tomorrow, bag each one up in a clear plastic trash bag, tie ‘em with a knot, and take them to that big dirt field across from the camps... oh! And socks! I don’t need socks! And sweaters! Ooooh and sweatpants, I don’t need no stinkin’ sweatpants!



Charles, Jerry, Geno, and Steve stand next to the tent slashed by a Union Pacific Railroad Police Officer. The four homeless men told the officer that there was nobody in the tent. The officer first used a megaphone to demand that anyone in the tent come out. He then took out a knife, drew his gun, and slit open the side of the tent. There was nobody inside. Geno jumped up and said “hey, you can’t do that, that’s private property, we have a restraining order against the city and you can’t harass us like this.” Geno said the officer holstered his gun and pulled out a can of mace and began shaking it. He warned Geno and the other three men not to come any closer. Geno told him they were ten feet away and had no intention of coming any closer.

The War on Terrorism Comes Home

By Mike Rhodes

August 29, 2007 - Elected Fresno officials held a press conference to announce a major effort to eliminate westside gangs. Several of them linked the war on terror to the effort to eliminate gangs. They also promoted technology that will increase video surveillance and put GPS tracking devises on West Fresno residents in order to reduce crime. The campaign is now underway and using four primary elements:

1. Target Specific enforcement
2. The aggressive use of technology
3. Intervention and prevention
4. Community Involvement

Fresno City Council member Jerry Duncan, stressing the urgency of this effort compared the campaign to the war on terror. Duncan, speaking about gang members, said “make no mistake about it, they are terrorists and they are as much of terrorists as those people in Iraq that are blowing up innocent people.” Mayor Autry said “the connection with the war on terror and the war against gangs at home is not a spin, it is a very real connection.”

Police Chief Dyer outlined the strategy for defeating gangs on the westside. He said “effective today the police department will deploy a new tactical unit specifically designed to eliminate West Fresno gang activity. The West Fresno gang team, will operate similar to the Bulldog Tactical Team conducting citywide high-visibility targeted enforcement of West Fresno gang members with an emphasis in Southwest Fresno where violent gang crime has occurred with regularity.”

Dyer singled out three gangs for immediate elimination - The Dogpound, Villa Posse, and Strother Boys. A map detailing gang territory on the westside was available at the press conference and is reproduced below. Dyer said that the three gangs targeted for elimination “comprise 250 of the most violent and dangerous criminals in Fresno involving themselves in crimes such as murder, business and residential robberies, as well as frequent drive by shootings. Once membership in these three gangs diminishes significantly other gangs will be targeted for elimination.”



Fresno City Council member Jerry Duncan, stressing the urgency of this effort compared the campaign to the war on terror. Duncan, speaking about gang members, said “make no mistake about it, they are terrorists and they are as much of terrorists as those people in Iraq that are blowing up innocent people.”

The Fresno Police Department intends to expand its video policing efforts in this war against West Fresno gangs. Dyer said they have “the capability to immediately deploy up to six portable cameras into locations to allow for active monitoring of gang members in neighborhoods who may be involved in criminal activity.” These cameras are in addition to the permanent video surveillance cameras that have been introduced into the community over the last two years. Dyer said that the portable cameras may or may not have signs to notify residents that they are being monitored.

Global Positioning System (GPS) devices will also be used to fight gangs. Dyer said that “currently 20 parolee gang members are on active GPS monitoring and within the next few weeks, 20 juvenile gang members on probation will be actively monitored by GPS. These GPS monitors allow for real time, around the clock monitoring and tracking of offenders.”

A third component of the technology used to fight gangs will be geo-forensic crime data. Dyer described this technology by saying a “crime analyst assigned to the department’s crime view unit will identify

gang-involved crimes and trends, and provide custom crime mapping. These maps can be overlaid to include offender residence maps to provide instant analysis of likely suspects including parolees, probationers and sex offenders allowing command staff to target our anti-gang efforts and strategically direct resources.”

Dyer said “while enforcement will play a major role in the elimination of gangs in southwest Fresno, we fully understand that the long term solution is offering those who choose a way out of the gang lifestyle an opportunity to do so.” He said his department and volunteers would aggressively recruit African-American gang members to join the mayor’s gang prevention initiative “by going door to door offering our services.”

The fourth element of the campaign will be community involvement. Dyer said they are working with community leaders and faith based groups in West Fresno and they will “establish a gun buy back program which will be launched next month.” Dyer said they will set up a gang watch hotline and hold “farewell to gangs” celebrations.

In addition to Dyer several elected officials spoke at the press conference, including mayor Alan Autry, District Attorney Elizabeth Egan, & city council members Cynthia Sterling, Henry T Perea, and Jerry Duncan. All were supportive of the plan.

Backpacks and School Supplies - Not the militarization of West Fresno.

By Rev. Floyd D. Harris Jr and the Community Alliance staff

The National Network in Action, under the leadership of Rev. Floyd D Harris Jr, organized a community event on George Street earlier this summer that drew several hundred residents. The 1st annual Unity in the Black and Brown Community was held in the area known as “The Dog Pound,” which is one of the areas targeted by the City of Fresno’s domestic “War on Terrorism.” Harris says that there is a lack of resources in this community and that “young black men who live in West Fresno can’t find a good paying job to support their family.”

Harris said “West Fresno children have been traumatized by being forced at gun point to sit on the curb during house raids by the Fresno Police Department. No one in this local government cares about Black People.” Rev Harris and his supporters have been organizing in this area to give the children and their parents hope. He demands that the residents of west Fresno be treated with dignity and respect.

Harris and the National Network in Action handed out backpacks, Pens, Pencils, Paper, and Folders. Harris asked the children what they wanted to be in the future. The answer was Doctor, Lawyer, Airplane Pilot, and School Teacher. Rev. Harris will be going to their school to check on them throughout the school year. This project is a shining example of giving west Fresno youth the tools they need to succeed.



Police Chief Jerry Dyer said “We do not want to be seen as an occupying force in West Fresno”

kids who do well in school get jobs and kids who get jobs don't become involved in gangs. That's a bottom line.

Recently a Bee columnist asked me what I would do to work effectively on the gang problem in Fresno. Here's the rest of my list, in no particular order.

1. Open to the public community workshops with ex gang members.
2. Prison and jail tours for all kids, not just at-risk kids, all kids.
3. Measure the effectiveness of gang units by persons outside the police department – which then report back to the police funding sources, such as the City Council. (The evidence is in: gang suppression units don't work, and gang injunctions don't work, not in the long run.)
4. Mandatory cultural competence training of the police by the various cultures in the community.
5. Careful vetting of officers who work in gang units, choosing the least macho, most youth-sympathetic officers for anti-gang work with kids. The police should not look like a gang of linebacker thugs with MAGIC written across their backs.
6. Give the police a deep education on the history of gangs from a non-police perspective – why they exist, what function they perform in the community, how people get in and get out, what are the gang exit strategies, from the Irish in New York to the gangs we have today.
7. Beef up and prioritize job training for youths that involves the community, business and educators.
8. Police gang investigators should begin to develop transparency. They should not meet exclusively with law enforcement at their California Gang Investigators Association meetings. Such inbreeding is myopic and self-referential and doesn't consider the larger community and what it could offer. It also fosters secret and sometimes unlawful techniques, such as coercive interrogation, hidden bribes, and secret deals.
9. Involvement of local sports heroes in gang prevention and education.
10. Community programs involving the creative arts and sports after school.

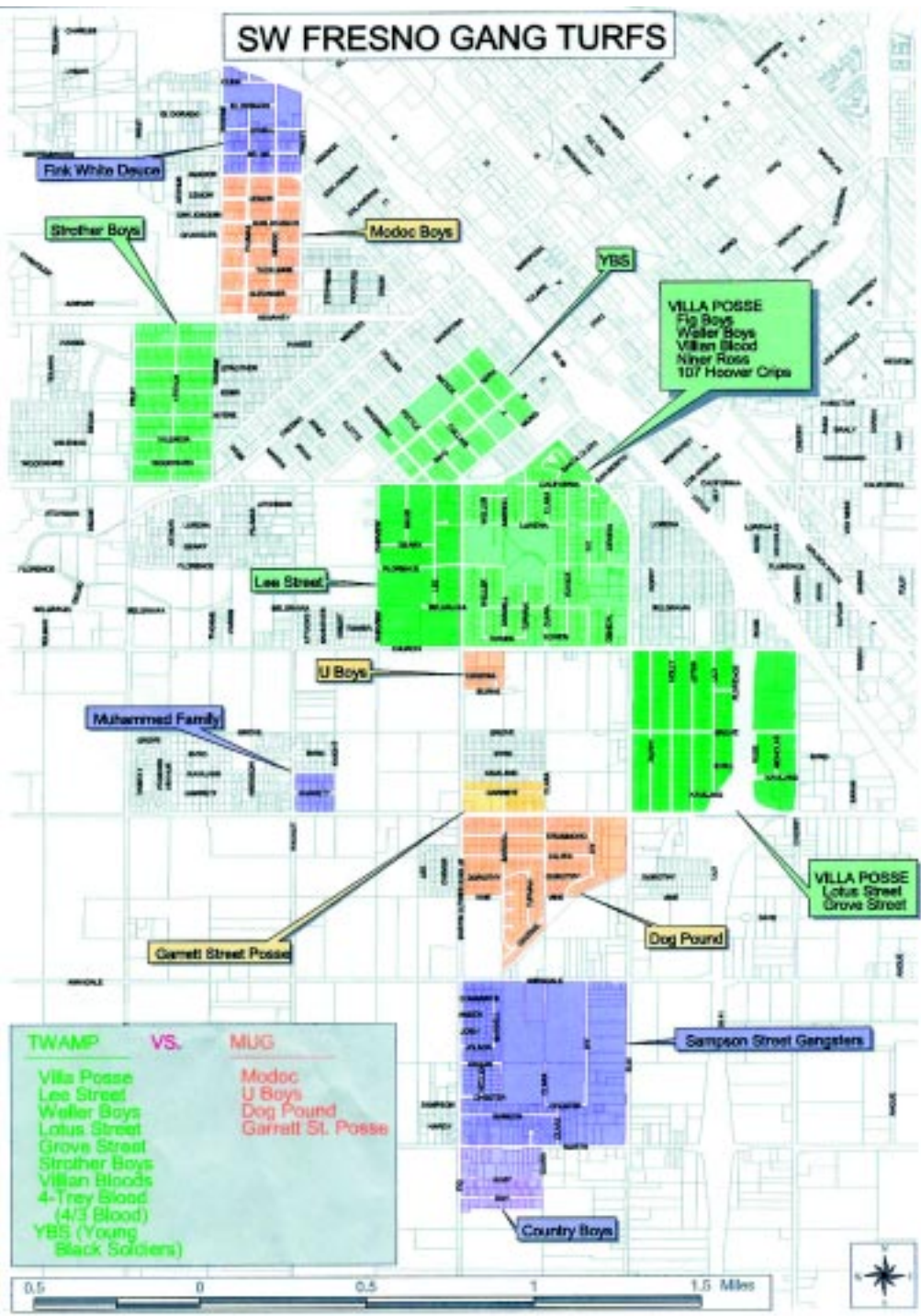


The March for Justice was held earlier this year in west Fresno. Marchers called for an end to homelessness, the stopping of police brutality, and health care for all. The road to ending gang violence includes more jobs that pay a living wage, better educational opportunities, and law enforcement that is not viewed as an occupying force.

11. Various gang prevention programs, including public rewards for ex gang members who work in the community.
12. Real training for police doing gang investigations and "gang experts" who testify in court (studies have shown that such "experts" base their expertise on a police culture and theories about gangs rather than real information).
13. End the program of labeling kids as gang members based on their associations, neighborhoods, colors, etc. This program creates hostility.
14. An improved police complaint procedure that really works and is accessible, and which reports to

the person making the complaint.

15. The use of de-militarized police in the gang communities, i.e., officers not in uniform, not wearing guns, not searching randomly, respecting people's homes and persons. Officers circulating in those neighborhoods offering to help make connections with various social services, mental health, job training.
16. Creation of gang courts which de-emphasize incarceration as a "solution" to gang activity, and instead promote community service and other alternatives.
17. Meaningful and effective drug treatment programs available free to anyone with a drug or alcohol problem.
18. A powerful community review board that would review police complaints and responses to those complaints; the board should be made up of community activists and minority groups, and should include persons who have rehabilitated after being involved in the criminal justice system, as well as police, probation officers, etc.
19. A study of the reasons Fresno Police Department gang units have been created. Are they a response to social hysteria, or are they addressing a real prob-



This is the map the Fresno Police Distributed of gangs in West Fresno.

21. Gang units should not be separate from the rest of the police department. It creates an "elite" force that is less accountable than the rest of the police department, and it leaves other officers out of the mix, reducing their influence and educational value.
22. Serious training in investigation skills for gang investigators.
23. End the informant system. Informants undermine the legitimacy of the police, are paid or rewarded for information, and are the source of cynicism of the police as well as wrongful convictions.
24. Get rid of secret locations for gang units. Make them available to the public. We are not at war with our own citizenry.
25. Develop policies within the police department to get rid of the code of silence where officers protect each other. Reward officers for reporting misconduct by other officers.
26. Have gang units work closely with community organizations, non-profits, private businesses, etc. for the common objective of reducing gang violence.
27. End the War on Drugs. Take the profit motive out of gang membership. Capitalism is too powerful an incentive to give to dealers, thieves and murderers.
28. Educational focus on gang life in schools, with an emphasis on de-romanticizing the gang life and a focus on the personal risks and the available alternatives

I'd love to take credit for all these wonderful if politically unfeasible ideas, but they come from others with greater knowledge and expertise than I – they come from scholars, criminologists, sociologists and psychologists who have studied gang cultures and problems for years and have concluded, like the Department of Justice, that our current war on gangs, perpetrated in a slightly modified form by our own Fresno Police Department, is – simply put – bankrupt.

It's time to start over.

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Catherine Campbell is a Fresno civil rights and appellate attorney. Her email address is iscathsoup@comcast.net

West Fresno Residents Speak Out

By Francine Ramos

On the corner of Martin Luther King Blvd. and Jensen avenue lays an open field. It is a large piece of flat land, covered by loose dirt small rocks, and several caged in trees. One could stand at the corner and peer over the land in search of a blossom of color, a flower perhaps, but nothing more than a forgotten, overlooked, piece of land is immediately visible. During a time in Fresno where purchasing land is at an all time high out in the Westside of Fresno, there are no bidding wars for this lot on Martin Luther King Blvd and Jensen avenue. It seems that not only the environment on the Westside has suffered by the rest of Fresno’s thriving north side eye, but also its inhabitants.

Yet, on August 29 Chief Dyer, along with Mayor Autry, Council members Cynthia Sterling and Henry Perea, as well as several others made this once forgotten area of Fresno a top priority. The reason is not land development, or recreational activities like a huge multiplex movie theater with an attached eatery, but rather, gangs. According to the Fresno Police Department, there are allegedly 25 gangs in the Westside of Fresno, including 700 active gang members and 700 gang associates. In an area that spans only several street blocks one would think that by the words Dyer used that all those living on the Westside were gang members or “terrorists” as Dyer likened gang members to.

Dyer’s initiative is called “Operation Westside” and will be comprised of a West Fresno gang Tactical unit including one sergeant as well as eight officers. The unit will work closely with other departments and Federal Law Enforcement agencies to “eliminate” the “terrorists gang members” that Dyer says live on the Westside of Fresno.

The first three targets of “Operation Westside” will be The Dog Pound, Villa Posse and the Strother Boys. All of which Dyer says are the most dangerous and violent criminals. The three major devices that Fresno Police Department plan to utilize are; GPS monitoring system, data and statistical gang information and last, cameras positioned in those areas that are believed to be gang hangouts.

One can drive throughout the Westside in search of a public place where members of the community can gather, and not find one. There are no public hangouts for residents of Westside Fresno to enjoy, no restaurants with outdoor seating to sit and converse. Besides liquor stores and churches (some which contain bars on the windows) and can be found on any given corner, there are just residential homes, and apartment complexes and the occasional school. So the intrusive cameras will more than likely be placed in these residential areas, where families live, where homeowners mow their lawns, where children play and ride their bikes outside.

Driving into the alleged area that Fresno Police say Dog Pound gang members live, it is clear that this is an area overlooked by the City of Fresno. Driving in on Vine Avenue, there is a large erected wall that is reminiscent of a prison wall. It begins at Vine and continues on toward Bardell Avenue. At the top of this mile long grey border are bars that tower over the bricks and at the end of these metal bars are barbwire. The sidewalk is the only part of the area that seems intact, the grass has long yellowed and deadened. A tree that stands off center near the sidewalk on Bardell Ave. surrounded by a small dirt area, positioned right in front of the large prison like barrier is an overgrown a tree, an obvious fire-hazard. Its trunk is large and beastlike. Its limbs are all over grown. Its branches sway in the small breeze that blows through this area. Its leaves fall off and crowd the remaining part of the side walk and cover parts of the street. If a branch were to fall, or one of the large tree’s limb break off who would be held accountable for the blatant disregard for the environment that surrounds the Westside of Fresno.

East George and SouthTupman are two residential streets that meet up right before a dead end which leads to another seemingly endless wide open field. Opal Brown, 73 also known as “mother” in this community has lived on the Westside for the last 40 years. Shielded from the sun by well maintained trees that line the side of her home, (trees that she and her family have kept up and cared for, not the



Community Activists Rev. Floyd Harris Jr. places flowers on the memorial for Eric Foster. Photo by Francine Ramos

City of Fresno) she reminisces on the days of community unity. A time she recalls when she knew every family that lived down the street. Pointing to different homes throughout the area, she states the names of families that have long since moved out.

In the last three years Brown describes the once peaceful scene to have taken a turn for the worst. Brown raised her ten children in this area. She reared them to do the right thing, but says that police harassment and assumptions that everyone living in this area is a gang member brings moral and trust in the police an unlikelihood. “They just harass us. I’m even scared to go outside my home at night. When one of my family members was on parole the police would come over here and search my whole home. They would go through all my things and not find anything. Why do they need to mess up my things, I ain’t the one on parole. They just assume that we are all bad and that’s the furthest thing from the truth,” said Brown.

Opal Brown’s views and memories of the injustice done in this neighborhood also echo in the voices of other members of this community. Across the street from Brown’s home, lives her daughter Cassandra Wharry, 42. Wharry recalls a time when police went into her home and demanded information about her children. She tells of how they proceeded to tell her that they knew she was on parole or probation with an extensive criminal history. Mrs. Wharry has never been in trouble with the law, nor does she have any type of criminal history. Yet, this is a common theme of how police officers who occasionally patrol this area treat members of the community.

On the corner of Bardell and Dorthy, an area alleged to be the heart of the Dog Pound, families gather in their front yards to enjoy the cool breeze and talk about the recent initiative set forth by Dyer and the Fresno Police department. Darnell Smith, 30 years old has lived on the Westside since he was a child. Standing in front of his home, he talks of how his neighborhood feels about what is to take place.

“Right, now if the police were to come by they would consider my family, and what me and my cousins are doing gang activity.” A group of seven males ranging in ages from 16 through 30, all family, first cousins are preparing to get their hair braided. None are wearing gang clothing, none are involved in illegal activity they are all just enjoying the summer day.

“There isn’t anything to do out here. There is no gym for us to work out in. There is no park to play football, basketball; there are just all these fields. They build everywhere else in Fresno, but nothing happens over here on the Westside. There is nothing for us to focus on,” said Smith.

Statements were made regarding Westside gangs by Chief Dyer that compared them to terrorists and pushed for Fresno residents to engage in this war on terrorism in Fresno County by eliminating gang members of Westside Fresno. Smith said. “To be

honest with you not everyone that lives on this side are gang members. People over here just want to do what’s right, they just want to make their life right. You know, you may have some that have to protect themselves, and maybe they may gang bang a little, but not everybody is like that over here. Terrorists? Have you ever seen a black man blow up anything? No, right. There are no terrorists in the Westside.”

Some of homes that line the streets of Bardell are enclosed in by chain linked fences. Most of the homes have yards that are kept up, grass that is green, and flowers that will obviously bloom in the springtime. What is green and well kept is due to the members of this community, home owners, renters that care about the community. If one listened to the media long enough, these images would be nonexistent. “You shouldn’t judge a book by it’s cover. And the police do just that. I am not a gang member. But I live here and always have. All them are my family. We are no gang. We are family. Tell me what we are doing wrong?” said Smith.

Just then amid, the sound of crows flying overhead, taking refuge in the trees that stand in front of Smith’s house on Bardell, a young male age sixteen begins walking out from the home and begins to speak. “Tell me what am I doing wrong? What are we doing wrong? The police need to ask themselves why is the crime bad over here. They need to ask why when someone does something bad, what made them do it. People that do those crimes do it because they aint got no food, there is no money in their pocket, they aint got no place to stay. What other choice do they have? They can’t get any jobs. They (the police) all live over there, they don’t live here. They don’t understand what it’s like, said the sixteen year old.”

Darnell Smith is thirty years old and has never been in trouble. Yet, he said that no matter what happens if a police pulls him over or sees him anywhere, the first thing they ask him is- what gang are you from? Are you on parole or probation? He states that there is this preconceived notion that any African-American male is automatically perceived as being a threat and a gang member. Smith said that that is just not how things are.

“Now they’re going to put cameras everywhere. They aren’t going to see nothing. We are not out here committing crimes like they say we are. You know I have never been in the slave days, but that’s exactly what I feel like now. I feel like this is the slave days all over again. When we try to do right, we can’t never do right by the police. But when we do wrong, they treat us like there is no good in us. If we don’t do what they say they treat us like we are not equal. Serve and protect, nah, they’re just here to serve and get paid.”

Pointing to the corner at Bardell ad Dorothy, Smith says, “Just look over there. There are no crosswalks, not a single one. Yet the police are the first to give us a ticket for jaywalking. Why? Build us a cross walk, paint us one. How do we get tickets for jaywalking

when there are no crosswalks? But no it seems they would rather arrest us and give us tickets then help us,” said Smith.

There is a statewide crackdown on gangs. California Gang Reduction, Intervention and Prevention is part of a Governor Schwarzenegger initiative to rid California meanest streets of gangs. Schwarzenegger placed former US Attorney for the Eastern District of California, Paul Seaves in charge of CALGRIP, along with a ten member panel. Included in that ten member panel are Fresno’s, Chief Dyer and John Shegerian. Fresno will be given a plenty of money to help law enforcement in their effort to fight gang crime. Fresno Police are also to provide job training for at risk youth, in an effort to halt admission into gangs.

Smith, as well as other residents that are labeled gang members want nothing more than to be employed, and have something to do as well as more to offer their family.

Community Activist and President of The National Network in Action, Rev. Floyd Harris Jr., who also lives in the Westside agrees that the Fresno Police need to be more of a positive force in the community rather than a negative. Rev. Harris is hoping to have a community hotline as well as form a community meeting to unite all those living on the Westside.

For some like Westside Resident Tammy Delt, too much has happened to her and her family, that she sees no reconciliation. Delt who will celebrate her 40 birthday in less than two weeks has lived in the Westside since childhood. After leaving and finding housing in other parts of Fresno, Delt decided to return, opting to give her children memories of the Westside she grew up in. “Just last week, my daughter who is a 4.0 in high school was verbally assaulted by gang members while leaving school. My daughter who is not a gang member was called unspeakable names and had her life threatened by gang members for something she had no part in. Just because they don’t like a male cousin of my daughters they threaten her. I went to speak with the Principal and immediately requested an inter-district transfer, “said Delt.

The gang that threatened the life of Tammy Delt’s daughter was not one of the three targeted by Fresno Police Department as one of the most violent.

“Nothing is going to be done. A few months ago there was a drive by shooting. A stray bullet went into my home, hitting the wall; no one was injured, thank God. The police were called and even though they have a substation not far from here. It took them thirty minutes to get here. Thirty minutes. They just don’t care. A police presence is seen after something horrible happens like a murder or something. Then after about a week or so, you don’t see them no more. And if you try to call them for help, they take even longer to respond. How can we feel like they care about us, when they are nowhere to be found when we need help,” said Delt.

Tammy Delt describes her youth growing up near George and Tupman, and Clara street. The field that was there during her childhood, today still remains empty and unused. She questions why City Officials have not done something productive with the land like build a park for the younger generation to fill

idle time by playing sports or having family gatherings.

It’s the loss of a community that Delt feels Westside residents have suffered from most. Back when she was growing up the Ivy Community Center was thriving. They offered entertainment and activities for children and teenagers. She even recalls outings they went on. Those days she looks back on with fondness. It is those memories she wanted to give her children, but it seems that after this last incident of violence, she gave up all hope.

“People that want to be part of the solution need to address the problems at hand. Not just the gangs on the streets here. They have to get to the root of the problem in order to solve this gang violence. Then and only then will the upcoming years be better for our children,” said Delt.

Rev. Harris along with fellow- community activist Lewis Coleman Jr. say that they plan to be part of that solution. When the police come and leave, Coleman and Harris will remain fighting for their people and their community. When Darnell Smith alleged gang member is asked whether he thinks that this new “Operation Westside” will have a positive

effect on gangs and violence in Westside Fresno he answers with both a pessimistic and optimist attitude.

“Do gang prevention programs work? I think most of the time it’s just a bunch of talk. They say they want the violence to end but they are making money off this that makes me wonder if they really even care. We don’t need any more people saying one thing then doing something different. But if they could give us some jobs where we wouldn’t have to be watching our backs, a place where we could work and have something to do, it would be perfect around here,” said Smith.

After the sun retreats back into the sky and the moon begins to reveal itself, everything on the Westside begins to darken, even the most lit up areas become dim by the lack of light shed by streetlamps. The field at Martin Luther King Jr. and Jensen seems darkest. If one stands directly across the street and looks toward the center of the field, one can see a glimmer of color. Crosses painted red and with flowers teeming around it reveal a victim of gun violence but it’s that color that seems almost illuminated shining boldly, like a ray of hope in a forgotten part of Fresno.

Holding the Fresno Police Department Accountable

By Ellie Bluestein

The Central California Criminal Justice Committee (CCCJC) workshop of September 12 was excellent. Gloria Hernandez and other members who have been handling complaint cases outlined the process and how to help people with it. Attorney Laura Guzman McGill prepared an instruction sheet on what to do when confronted with police misconduct and how to prepare for police interviews and investigations. She also informed us of a current case which is being heard now regarding Officer Twedt, who has been in court for 3 years now, challenging a judgment against him that has been through three appeals and has already cost the city thousands of dollars.

Sgt. Watson from Internal Affairs gave us updated information on how the complaint process works, with investigations being handled by the department against which the complaint has been lodged, and only in special cases by Internal Affairs. No pretense of impartiality in that process and no further release of information to the complainant once the complaint has been filed. Result of the investigation leads to a conclusion of “complaint sustained.” Meaning misconduct has occurred, “Complaint Unfounded” meaning false claim or event did not happen, “Exonerated,” meaning the action or conduct occurred but is within department policy. But the complainant is never notified of the decision or of any action taken as a result. Once the complaint has been filed, that’s it, dead end, and no report back. Surely there must be a better system of accountability and satisfaction for people in our community!

Rebeca Rangel is attending the national meeting of NACOLE (National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement). We still need contribu-

tions to cover the cost of registration and expenses. Checks may be made out to the Center for Nonviolence and marked “For CCCJC” and mailed to our address at: P.O. Box 4555, Fresno 93744. Rebecca will report back to us at the Center for Nonviolence, Wednesday, October 10, at 6:00 p.m. All who are interested are invited to attend.

Does Fresno Need an Independent Police Auditor?

October 17, 7:00 p.m., hosted by Pacific University, in Ashley Auditorium, at the north end of McDonald Hall, 1717 S. Chestnut Avenue. Forum co-sponsored by many community organizations and individuals.

There will be speakers on various aspects of the issue. We expect to have someone who opposes the IPA, but so far there is no one willing to speak to that. Five council members have voted against it four times, but none of them is willing to publicly explain why. Several of them are running for higher office and should be held accountable for their past decisions. When we lobbied them to vote yes, they told us that the issue was not of interest to people in their districts and that no one really knew what an IPA is, so we are trying to hold a public forum to inform people, and none of them is willing to step forward and help us enlighten people on the issue. We need to fill the hall and show them that there is interest in finding out about the IPA and that we will hold them accountable for their votes.

For further information you can call The Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies at Pacific University: 453-34321.

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THE WELCH REPORT – Jack Welch M.D.

Why are we pursuing a failed policy in Iran?

“The U.S. Campaign to force Iran to halt uranium enrichment through threats and sanctions has produced no results and arguably made things worse.”

Iranian leaders now are backing away from earlier offers to agree to unconditional talks with the U.S. The U.S. did take some important steps in the right direction this spring, but those talks were followed by several giant steps backwards including Vice President Cheney's fist-shaking.

A Focus on Sticks, With no Carrots

“The administration continues to focus on efforts to compel Iran to agree to all U.S. demands before negotiation, by threatening more punitive, unilateral sanctions.” At the same time administration officials continue to call for regime change in Iran. Administration briefings suggest “no option is off the table” including military action, increasing Iran's threat perception.

Congress Talks of Sanctions, not Diplomacy

Congress has recently stepped up efforts to pressure Iran into compliance. Legislation imposing new unilateral sanctions on Iran already is cosponsored by 324 representatives and 68 senators.

“This hard-line approach is foolish because it brings to a halt any diplomatic gains made through recent Baghdad talks between the U.S. and Iran; it also undermines progress the International Atomic Energy Agency and European governments have made in discussions with Iran.

The consensus among U.S. allies in Europe and the Middle East is in favor of direct face-to-face diplomatic talks with Iran. But the U.S. administration continues to rely on threats and coercion to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue.

In May 2005 Iran made a secret offer for a deal that could answer all U.S. demands but one, the demand for the Islamic Republic of Iran to be replaced by another government. The U.S. administration ignored this proposal going beyond a simple rejection.

Congress should insist that the U.S. sit down with the Iranians and work with the international community to resolve this dispute. “Congress should also send a message of goodwill to the Iranian government by passing legislation by Sen. James Webb(S 759) and Rep. Walter Jones (H.J. Res 14)that would require the administration to seek Congressional approval before attacking Iran.

Conclusion

“War is not the answer to the U.S. - Iran conflict, but peace between our two countries is possible through peaceful, non-military means. The Iranians do not need to be forced to the negotiating table by sanctions or threat of force. Since 2005 they have been begging to sit at the table with the U.S. to make a new deal...Congress, by breathing new life into U.S. diplomacy could save a lot of lives and national treasure by doing so. Instead, if they open the door for “unspeakable horror in the Middle East Part II; the voters should, in the words of Harry Truman, give 'em hell if they don't take this opportunity now” (Source, Joe Volk, executive secretary of the Friends Committee on National Legislation8/21/07)

BOOKSALE

BOOKS ✌️ CDs ✌️ DVDs

Location:

SW Corner of Olive & Van Ness

Date & Time:

October 6th: 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Questions/Donations:

FCNV: 1584 N. Van Ness

(Mon – Fri 11 – 3 pm) 23-PEACE

STIR IT UP

with Richard Stone who will be interviewing Michael Blackbull and guests about Indigenous People's Day.

Wednesday, October 10th- 3 p.m.

KFCF 88.1 FM.

2nd Wednesday Video Series

Salud!

Find out what puts Cuba on the map in the quest for global health ...

A timely examination of human values and the health issues that affect us all, *¡Salud!* looks at the curious case of Cuba, a cash-strapped country with what the BBC calls ‘one of the world’s best health systems.’ From the shores of Africa to the Americas, *¡Salud!* hits the road with some of the 28,000 Cuban health professionals serving in 68 countries, and explores the hearts and minds of international medical students in Cuba -- now numbering 30,000, including nearly 100 from the USA.

Wednesday, October 10th

Noon & 7 pm @ the FCNV

(1584 N. Van Ness, SE Corner of McKinley and Van Ness)

Potluck @ 6:30

Discussion to follow evening showing

The FCNV is a Host Organization

to many non-profit groups in the Fresno community. We provide a safe meeting place and media resources to the groups using our facility, including:

- Youth Link
- Project: Male
- Central California Institute
- CVPPAC
- Rondalla
- Peace Fresno
- WILPF
- FACTS
- CCCJC
- Community Alliance

A CENTURY OF MIND CONTROL:

Implications for our lives in the
21st Century

October 8, 7-8:30 p.m.

October 15, 7-8:30 p.m.

October 22, 7-8:30 p.m.

October 29, 7-8:30 p.m.

Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Avenue

This is a miniseries based on the video "The Century of the Self" which traces the uses of modern psychology during the 20th Century to manipulate human populations through things like advertising and government propaganda. It looks at how the insights of Freud and his colleagues and family found ways to bypass human reason and make appeals to primal instincts on the unconscious level. The videos come in four, one-hour segments, and each will be followed by group discussion.

Fair Trade

coffees and chocolate for sale

Help support farmer co-ops in Latin America, Africa, and Asia with a purchase of Fair Trade coffees or chocolate.

New item: Organic Dried Cranberries!

Available at the FCNV M-F 11am-3pm Details:23-PEACE



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

WILPF Fresno, PO Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755

Graphic by Lincoln Cushing

Officers and Members have been Busy

This year almost every position is filled with committees of officers: The Executive committee is chaired by Jean Hays. She is assisted by four vice-presidents: Jean Kennedy, Jan Slagter, Judy Stege and Ingrid Carmean. Membership Committee includes Laura Fultz, Nora Dewitt, Lynn Graham, and Lisa Robinson. The Legislative Committee is chaired by Lydia Flores assisted by Cynthia Tilghman, Polly Victor, Betty Ramos and Rose Rowe. Publicity and Community Alliance WILPF page is being done Marilyn Byrne. Treasurer is Meta Schettler. Secretary is Elizabeth Swearingen. The Annual Craft Faire is being co-chaired by Alvora Trujillo, Ingrid Carmean, and Janet Capella. Intern this year is Sylvia Garcia

Just a month into the new program WILPF has been busy supporting many activities. We took part August 30th in counter recruitment at the local high schools. Supported the KFCF Banquet, August 28th Move on Vigil, September 21st International Day of Peace sponsored the Peace Fresno. Thursday Sept 27th Alvora Trujillo will be guiding women form the Holy Cross Center in painting t-shirts for the Clothline Project. Members have supported been busy encouraging Congress to stop the war in the "California Calling Campaign. September 15th we tabled for the Climate Change Forum at the UU Church. September 17th we presented, some dressed in Jane Addams vintage dresses, the latest Jane Addams Award books to the Gillis branch of the Fresno County Public Library and read books to Fresno Unified School students. The Grannies celebrated the Tamejavi Festival whose purpose is to advance justice, equality, human rights, dignity and respect for all. It was held September 22 the first day of Fall at Radio Park. Our September 24th WILPF Meeting was held at Elizabeth Swearingen's home. Thank you Elizabeth and I want to take this time to thank Sandra Iyall for so kindly sharing her home with us for our Annual Retreat. September 30th the Raging Grannies took part in the musical and floral tribute to Mahatma Gandhi held

in conjunction with Stop the Hate Week at CSUF Peace Garden.

WILPF and the Raging Grannies Protest at Costa's Office

A coalition of peace groups, Moveon.org, Code Pink, Peace Fresno, and WILPF have joined forces to pressure to Democratic Congressman Jim Costa into voting against the September war funding bill. The Raging Grannies joined WILPF on the first day and sang songs against the war. These groups are planning to take turns protesting every day until the vote against funding for war is cast.

Joan Poss Leads by Example

For the past years Joan has been faithful participant of Women in Black both at the Courthouse and on CSUF campus. She comes dressed in black with her peace sign, and copies of the Community Alliance to pass out. She stands silently even when people ask questions and try to engage her in conversation. People have gotten used to her being there. She has, especially in the last six months, seen the support against the occupation in Iraq grow. People walk by giving her the thumbs up sign. They smile at her instead of acting indignant about what she is doing.

Activism is not new to Joan; she has been a member of WILPF for many years. She is also very verbal against pesticides as an active member of Frescamp keeps the WILPF community aware of environmental issues.

Joan does not stand out there by her self: Sue Kern, Carolyn Mathers, Jean Hays and Vita Samian also join her in supporting peace. Joan is being singled out because she is as an inspiration to us, and we want to thank her for standing up for what she believes in. Congratulations Joan we appreciate you.



The Raging Grannies sang songs while they waited for Congressman Costa's assistant to speak to them.
Photo by Mike Rhodes

WILPF Events for October

Friday and Saturday Oct. 13-14
WILPF will be tabling at the
Inter-Mountain Harvest Festival

Monday Oct. 22nd WILPF Meeting
At Elizabeth Swearingen Home
7:00 PM; call a member for information.

Wednesday Oct 24th Take "Back the Night"
6-9 PM CSUF Campus Free Speech Area
We need volunteers to help table and
Display the clothesline Project.

Friday Oct 26th Title IX Forum
At the new U. U. Church
2672 Alluvial

Raging Grannies Calendar

Rehearsal Oct. 8th 7 PM at Ellie's
Call 229-9807 for directions.

Wednesday Oct. 24th 6-9 PM
Sing at CSUF. Take Back the Night

Friday Oct. 26th at 6:30 PM
WILPF will sponsor Title IX Forum
At the new UU Church on 2672 Alluvial.

Nov. 5th rehearsal 7 PM at Ellie's
Call 229-9807 for directions.

Women in Black

Silent Vigil
From 12-1:00 PM
Taking place at two venues:
Held on the steps of the Courthouse
Between Noon and 1:00 PM
Oct. 3rd and each first
Wednesday
of the month;
held at CSUF Campus
Free Speech Area
between Noon and 1:00 PM
Thursday October 25th
Women wear black and bring a sign.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom sponsors this page. They are responsible for all content (except the ads).



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Big Wheels Spin us into a Quagmire

By Ruth Gadebusch

Round and round it goes and where it stops nobody knows, except this is not the old television game that those of us of a certain vintage know. This war in Iraq is the real thing with no end in sight.



The long awaited Petraeus report is in, and just as we suspected: more of same. It's the same ol,' same ol' just give us more time. More time for more wounded? More time for more deaths? More time for more destruction? More time for more profit for Haliburton? More time until this president leaves office?

A sop was thrown in the Petraeus report regarding bringing 30,000 troops home, starting this fall. The only trouble with that is it was already part of the surge agreement. Despite all the denials that his report was vetted by the White House, it did not deviate from the president's line. The general now sports a fourth star on his shoulder, which is considerably different than what happened to those generals who did not march lockstep with the administration. Just ask General Shinseki.

On the sixth anniversary of the horrific attack on our homeland, we are bogged down in a war, ostensibly to avenge this transgression. The problem is that we attacked a country that had nothing to do with the attack. Nor did it have the weapons of mass destruction which was our other excuse for attacking Iraq. Saudi Arabia, which furnished the majority of the perpetrators —and probably the funding — of 9/11, remains a "close friend." There is something terribly confusing about this whole fiasco.

While proclaiming that the military surge was working, even General Petraeus admitted that the necessary political solution was still elusive. Although "progress is being made" remains the mantra, as it has in almost every report that was supposed to offer the final answer. It appears like the dog is chasing its own tail.

In the meantime we are nearing 4000 dead and 30,000 wounded. The toll of Iraqis is much worse, though we don't keep that count — as if their lives were not as valuable as ours. They may be rid of a dastardly dictator, but his replacement is death and destruction with their most basic needs in disarray.

While we spend billions in waging this war, neither we nor the Iraqis feel safer. Services for the returning wounded may be improving but are still far from what is needed. Meanwhile other needs in our society are being neglected, because the administration's focus on a military solution, coupled with its tax cuts for the wealthy, is draining our financial resources.

The president's speech following the Petraeus report makes it clear that we need not expect an end to this debacle during his term of office. Bragging that 5000 troops will be sent home by Christmas, he fails to note that 160,000 will still be there! Given reports of conditions in Iraq from other sources, the president seems near delusional as to all the benchmarks that will be met. Does "return on our success" sound akin to "mission accomplished"?

The American citizens have overwhelmingly expressed their belief that we should not be in Iraq; however, the political realities are such that the Democratic majority in Congress is so slim as to have little power. All too many Republicans end up supporting the president when push comes to shove, couching it as supporting the troops. Each party is jockeying for political advantage in the election of 2008 and the subsequent departure of this administration in January of 2009. That is a long time for this mayhem to continue.

Once again, it appears that political party is being put before nation, and personal power first of all. This struggle brings to mind this description: "Blessed are

they that go round and round, for they shall be known as big wheels." We need more than "big wheels" at the helm. We need people with the knowledge — and the will — to extricate us from this mess, created by this president's adventure, which morphed from capturing the terrorists into bringing democracy to the Middle East. We haven't done so well on either count. It is time to stop the destruction, return to diplomacy and use our resources to care for human needs.

###

Ruth Gadebusch is a former naval officer, 13 years as a Fresno Unified School District Trustee, Vice-President of the Center for Civic Education, Community Activist.

From the Greenhouse

by Franz Weinschenk

HERE'S THE BAD NEWS: According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the Valley town of Arvin, located 20 miles southeast of Bakersfield, has the worst air in the nation! What's strange about that is that this little farm town (population 15,000) produces hardly any of the pollution it suffers from. Since it's located in the most southeastern part of the San Joaquin Valley, the surrounding mountains trap most of the airborne soot, grunge, and noxious contaminants that are blown in from the north. On hot summer days, the air is so thick with pollution you can actually smell its toxicity; the smog is so dense, you can't even see the nearby Tehachapi Mountains.

For the last couple of years Arvin's level of ozone — the primary component of smog — exceeded the amount considered acceptable on 73 days; second was Crestline at 65 days; Fresno registered 23 days last year; the Bay Area averages four.

Though figures for Arvin itself are not available, stats from the California Department of Health for Kern County, where Arvin is located, show that 17.5 percent of children under the age of 18 suffer from asthma. The state average is 14.8 percent; the national average is 12.2 percent.

Particularly in summer, the residents of Arvin complain of watery eyes, dry throats and inexplicable coughs. Many residents say that even a few minutes outside of their homes can set off an asthma attack.

Only last April our San Joaquin Valley Air Board voted to extend the region's deadline to meet federal ozone standards from 2012 to 2023, saying that cleaning up the air in the next five years is impossible. What they are saying is that five years isn't enough to get a handle on cleaning up emissions from Valley manufacturing plants, from the 24-hour flow of exhaust particulates from the diesel trucks that bathe our landscape every day, nor from the stench of mega-dairies who should be extracting methane from the mountains of manure they create and converting it into electricity instead of letting it foul up the atmosphere. And when 2023 comes around, what do you suppose they'll tell us? "Give us another ten."

Meanwhile, Amalia Leal, a family advocate with the Arvin School District, tells families with chronically asthmatic children, "Move!" She tells them, "If you love your child, move!"

And maybe the saddest part of this story is that I had to read about Arvin in the New York Times.

But THE GOOD NEWS is that on August 4, by a vote of 220 to 190, the House of Representatives passed the National Renewable Electricity Standard. This means that for the first time in history, the House passed a bill requiring that 15 percent of all our electricity will have to be generated from renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, hydro, bio-mass, or geo-thermal by the year 2020. Actually, California already requires a 20 percent renewable standard.

But the fight is hardly over because this fall, when the House and Senate start to negotiate over what will actually be in the energy bill, there's going to be a huge battle about whether or not to increase the miles per gallon (CAFE) standards for cars and light trucks. True, polls show Americans overwhelmingly want those standards to be raised, but it's not going to be easy, mainly because of a very tough, long-time Democratic

Congressman, Representative Charles Dingle, who represents Detroit and the auto industry. He opposes raising CAFE standards.

If you really think about it, raising CAFE standards would do the auto industry a big favor because more people would want to buy American. Everybody knows that in recent years Detroit has lost market share and money, closed plants and laid off workers. With gas prices high, anything that Detroit can do to come up with more fuel-efficient models would do the industry a lot of good because those are the cars people want to buy. Furthermore, raising CAFE standards would reduce America's Mid-East oil dependency and substantially reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases. So let your member of Congress know that you want the next generation of American cars to at least equal the miles per gallon of Japanese, Korean and European models.

###

Franz Weinschenk has been a teacher and school administrator in Fresno for over fifty years. He can be contacted by email at franzie@scccd.org

Scram! Vamoose!! Beat It!!!

By Maria Telesco, RN (Ret.)

Before the advent of antibiotics and high tech gadgetry, many critically ill patients — major trauma, heart attack, ruptured appendix — died. Nothing existed that could save them. Chronic ailments — tuberculosis was rampant — required rest and nursing care. Hospital stays of weeks, even months, were common. As new medications and technology increased, hospital time decreased. "Discharge Planner[s]" ensured patients would receive adequate care upon going home — and made sure they had a home to go to. No matter the duration of a hospital stay, patients were never ousted prematurely or unwillingly — until now.

Nobody envisioned patients being kicked to the curb like so many pee-soaked Chux pads. What happened? My knee-jerk response was "corporate greed." But whose? It's disturbingly complex. It didn't happen overnight; it evolved over a half century. The trend toward early release began in World War Two. Neither malice nor greed was the progenitor of what has morphed into a disgraceful aspect of our "health care" quagmire.

"They," the rule makers, often focus on extreme examples of a problem, then generalize. "They" develop a one-size-fits-all solution that fits NO-one, creates new problems, yet doesn't fix the old. H. L. Mencken said: "There's always an easy solution to every human problem: neat, plausible and *wrong*."

In World War Two, gravely injured troops went to hospitals "behind the lines." Those with minor injuries got patched-up in Field Hospitals ("M*A*S*H"), then returned to battle. These young, healthy kids were there to fight, not to spend time in hospital for minor injuries. And that was OK.

But then "they" started generalizing, and that wasn't OK. A hefty 19-year-old with a flesh wound could have the bullet removed and walk away. World War Two set the precedent for early releases, but "they" failed to factor in demographics. One size does NOT fit all. What's good for an otherwise healthy teenager is *not* OK for an acutely ill senior with chronic poor health.

WWII ended. Veterans needed jobs. Employers needed workers. Newly hatched Health Insurance was a perk luring vets to companies that offered it. A precedent was set; coverage was assumed to be job-related. A worker with a pre-existing condition could be stuck forever in a job s/he hated because the insurance provider at a potential other job refused coverage.

Commercialization of health care snuck up on us when Insurance companies began peddling health policies, thereby introducing profit motive to health care. Until recently, nobody seemed to notice or care that the vast profit was going, not to those who actually render care — Doctors, Nurses, the Hospitals themselves — but to an insurance company whose survival depends not

on care-giving, but on not giving care, thus FORCING CAREGIVERS TO RENDER LESS CARE IN LESS TIME.

“They” decreed that patients spent too much time in the hospital. What was good enough for our heroic wounded soldiers during the war was surely good enough for mere civilians. Propaganda created by actuaries – statisticians – employed by the insurance companies dictates the rules now. [Does anyone smell conflict of interest?] Thus the insurance industry seized control of America’s health care. The “Health Care *System*” transmogrified into the “Health Care *Industry*.”

The federal government created Medicare, got chummy with insurers, and agreed that patients were indeed getting too much cluck for their bucks. Medicare’s creators produced the next wonder of the world – DRGs - Diagnostic Related Groupings. Another one-size-fits-all dictum was written in cement: nobody could overstay their welcome.

“They” decreed a heart attack was worth three to five days; formerly two or three weeks. Hysterectomy – three days; previously ten. Appendix removal, home tomorrow; previously a week. Male hernia, home today; previously 5 days. Have a baby, go home in time to fix dinner for the family. Well, almost, but not quite. Yet!

We’re stuck with a patchwork “health care system” that renders very little health care, and is too disorganized to be called a system. A health care product the government brags is “the best in the world,” is available only to a small segment of the populace.

Government and insurance companies mandate how long patients may stay in the hospital. If the patient doesn’t feel up to it, or the doctor thinks his/her condition warrants a longer stay – they must petition the insurance company for more time. Often, the insurance company, in the person of a clerk without medical knowledge, says NO.

The first words nurses learn are these: “Whose needs are we here to meet?” There was only one right answer: the Patient’s. We were indoctrinated that patient’s needs always come first, the doctors’ second. Always, without exception.

Rumors are heard lately of legislation on the horizon which would fine hospitals for discharging patients prematurely and/or “dumping” them. But are the hospitals totally to blame? Perhaps not. The medical community has forfeited its decision-making power to the insurance companies. When insurers decree length of stay, permissible medications, even veto-power over surgery, they must be held accountable for deplorable results such as evicting patients and just turning them loose with no place to go. Insurers bully and intimidate doctors, nurses, hospital administrators and everyone else to follow their rules, under threat of withholding payment, a nasty tactic. [Anybody smell extortion?]

Even the most dedicated professional caregivers know blame can trickle down to them if the insurance company pulls out: “I’ll lose my job, maybe my professional license.” So they justify and go along with the edicts because they find themselves between the proverbial rock and hard place.

Years ago when nurses asked for a small pay raise, we were told “You became a nurse to help people, not to get rich.” Today’s nurses make a living wage, which they deserve. But when medical care became big bucks, it’s a slap in the face that it all goes, not to the Doctors and Nurses, but to the insurance company – the very entity whose goal is to insure that they get all the money and the patient doesn’t get much care,

NEVER should any patient be unwillingly removed from a hospital, nor sent on his/her way without the hospital making sure of where the patient’s going and how s/he will get there. When this does happen – and it is to be hoped that it will never happen again in Fresno – sure, the hospital should be censured. But there’s more than the hospital to be held accountable, and more than enough blame to go around. Yes, it really is corporate greed after all.

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Maria Telesco R. N. is a retired Registered Nurse whose

extensive experience in the health care field spanned four decades in New York, Puerto Rico and California. She taught student nurses, paramedics and EMTs. She can be reached at maria.telesco@sbcglobal.net

Air District 2007 Ozone Plan: Throwing Good Money after Bad

By Alvin Valeriano

Valley businesses will soon be under the predicament of “throwing good money after bad,” as they comply with regulations proposed in the 2007 Ozone Plan, which was recently adopted by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. As previous Alliance articles on valley air have pointed out, the District crafted a federally-mandated ozone attainment plan based on inept technological assessments and inaccurate inventories of pollution sources. **Some businesses will actually have to comply with onerous regulations that have very marginal effects on reducing ozone pollution.** And like the war in Iraq, huge sums of money will be spent, suffering will persist, and some lives will be lost prematurely.



During the District Governing Board hearing for the 2007 Ozone Plan, an industry lobbyist endorsed the plan, which sought an 11-year delay of clean valley air, somewhat reluctantly, stating that he is concerned that businesses, which would be deemed major sources of pollution, will be subjected to more burdensome requirements. Title V of the Federal Clean Air Act contains a hammer for areas that ask for delayed attainment of ozone standards by 2024: sources with emissions exceeding 10 tons per year of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) have to comply with more federal monitoring requirements. Areas that plan to attain ozone standards sooner, say 2017 or 2019, have a higher major source threshold, which is 25 tons of VOCs per year. As a result, business operations that have previously avoided major source designations will be deemed as new major sources, even after making significant, costly efforts to stay below the threshold of 25 tons per year. More valley businesses will be elevated to the major source category, because their VOC emissions exceed 10 tons per year.

The costs of complying with Title V requirements include the following: (1) Current applications fees range from \$2,000 to \$50,000 per facility, (2) A yearly assessment costs \$25 per permitted unit, (3) The application fee is reassessed for modifications to a Title V facility permit, (4) It can take up to a year to finished Title V permitting, (6) All costs associated with implementing Title V provisions are borne by major source facilities, and (7) Small businesses without in-house Title V personnel would need to hire consultants, which can cost from \$2,000 to 50,000, depending on the complexity of the permit preparation. In addition, in the event that the District fails to demonstrate attainment of the 8-hour ozone standard by 2024, then federally-mandated attainment fees would begin. These fees could range from \$13,000 to \$120,000 per facility per year. Around 150 non-agricultural sources will bear these costs. Depending on how emissions from agricultural sources are computed, as many as 600 businesses may be affected.

The purpose of Title V permits is to improve enforcement of air pollution laws. As such, it can be a good thing, provided that it does not get transformed into a maze of red tape and “make work” bureaucracy. Before starting operations, a facility, which wants to avoid the onerous federal monitoring requirements, can lower its “potential-to-emit” by using more effective pollution controls. Again, this can be a good thing, provided that the pollutant being reduced is highly relevant to lowering ozone levels, and at a cost which is lower than other ways of reducing ozone. For instance, in 2017, by a factor of 12.5 to 1, VOCs will contribute far less to ozone formation, compared to nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions, which mostly come from diesel-fueled trucks. Furthermore, conservatively assuming that it cost more to re-

duce NOx compared to VOC by a factor of 2 to 1, reducing NOx is six times more effective at reducing ozone compared to reducing VOC.

If spending monies are more directed to lowering NOx emissions, then ozone levels will come down sooner. But since the District’s dismal ozone plan ushers in the Title V hammer that will merely monitor compliance with VOC limits, then considerable resources will be wasted. With more businesses becoming Title V sources due to VOC emissions, you can bet on the following: the dollars spent for compliance with Title V would barely have an effect on lowering ozone levels, and the District coffers and bureaucracy would expand substantially. Ironically, the incontrovertible fact is that lower ozone levels are possible a lot sooner than 2024 (ISSRC “Clearing the Air” Draft Report, August 2007). Had the District done its work well, there won’t be de facto penalties slapped on business operations.

It’s really ironic that the District Governing Board members, who continually side with powerful business interests by refusing to adopt more aggressive regulations, voted for a plan that would likely hurt their friends’ pockets. Either they have something up their sleeves or they were not fully informed of the impending costs that do not effectively contribute to ozone reduction. If you know someone engaged in VOC-generating activities, such as milking cows, composting wastes, producing wine and brandy, processing farm products, or painting vehicles, do them a favor by telling them: Don’t throw good money after bad, consider the effects of air pollution on future generations, and join forces with valley residents demanding clean air by 2017.

###

Alvin Valeriano, an agricultural engineering graduate of the University of the Philippines, worked in the planning section of the air district for 4 1/2 years and co-founded Fresno’s Food Not Bombs in 1996. He can be reached at alvin.valeriano@sbcglobal.net.



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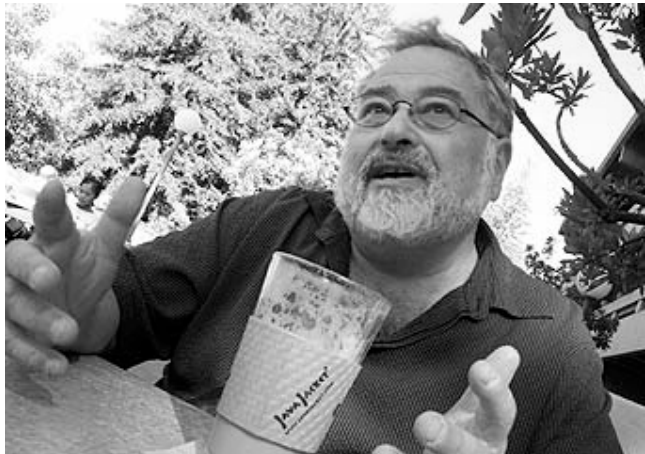
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No Center, No Centrists

By George Lakoff,
truthout | Guest Contributor



“Centrism” is the creation of an inaccurate, self-serving metaphor, and it is time to bury it.

There is no left-to-right linear spectrum in the American political life. There are two systems of values and modes of thought - call them progressive and conservative (or nurturant and strict, as I have). There are total progressives, who use a progressive mode of thought on all issues. And total conservatives. And there are lots of folks who are what I’ve called “biconceptuals”: progressive on certain issue areas and conservative on others. But they don’t form a linear scale. They are all over the place: progressive on domestic policy, conservative on foreign policy; conservative on economic policy, progressive on foreign policy and social issues; conservative on religion, but progressive on social issues and foreign policy, and on and on. No linear scale. No single set of values defining a “center.” Indeed, many such folks are not moderate in their views; they can be quite passionate about both their progressive and conservative views.

Barack Obama has it right: Get rid of the very idea of the right and the left and the center. American ideas are fundamentally progressive ideas - the ideas on which this country was founded and which carry forth that spirit. Progressives care about people and the earth, and act with responsibility and strength on that care.

The progressive view of government is simple. Progressive government has two aspects: protection and empowerment. Protection is far more than the military, police and fire departments. It includes consumer protection, worker protection, environmental protection, public health, food and drug safety; Social Security and other safety nets. It also includes protection from the government itself, and hence a balance of powers, openness, fundamental rights and so on.

Empowerments include roads and bridges; public education; government-developed communications like the internet and satellite communications systems; the banking system; the SEC and institutions that make a stock market possible, and the court system, mostly about contracts and corporate law. Progressive government makes business possible. No one makes any money in this country without progressive empowerment by government. A progressive foreign policy is not based solely, or even mainly, on the state - about the “national interest” defined as our military strength and GDP. Progressive foreign policy focuses on individual people’s interests as well as national interests: on poverty, disease, refugees, education, women’s and children’s issues, public health and so on.

These are simply American values. The progressive movement is a patriotic American movement. People who call themselves “centrists” share progressive views on important issue areas, but have conservative views on other major issue areas. The areas vary from person to person. There is no single moral perspective, no single set of agreed-upon issues.

The very idea that there is a “center” marginalizes progressives and sees them as extremists, when they simply share fundamental American values. The term “center” suggests there is a “mainstream” where most people are and that there is a single set of views held by that mainstream. That is false.

The fallacy matters in terms of Democratic electoral strategy. The Democratic base consists of people who

are mostly or totally progressive, just as the Republican base consists of people who are mostly or totally conservative. How does the Democratic Party as a whole, and Democratic candidates in particular, speak to those who are biconceptual?

I am a cognitive scientist, and I believe that people’s brains play a significant role in elections. From the perspective of brain science, the answer is a no-brainer. (Sorry, I couldn’t resist!) You speak to biconceptuals the same way you speak to your base: you discuss progressive values, and if you are talking to folks with both progressive and conservative values, you mainly talk about the issues where they share progressive values. What that does is evoke and strengthen the progressive values already there in the minds of biconceptuals.

And, of course, you don’t negate or argue against the other on their framing turf - remember “Don’t Think of an Elephant!”

That was the winning strategy of Sherrod Brown in Ohio. Brown is a thoroughgoing progressive who never moved one inch to the right. He talked about the issues where he agreed with his Ohio audiences - and legitimately spoke for them.

Think about Barack Obama going to Rick Warren’s megachurch and getting a standing ovation from evangelicals because he talked about the places where he agreed with them, he activated his values in them (values they already had), he came across as a man of principle, and he didn’t get in their face about where he disagreed.

The losing strategy is to move to the right, to assume with Republicans that American values are mainly conservative and that the Democratic Party has to move away from its base and adopt conservative values. When you do that, you help activate conservative values in people’s brains (thus helping the other side), you offend your base (thus hurting yourself), and you give the impression that you are expressing no consistent set of values, which is true! Why should the American people trust somebody who does not have clear values, and who may be trying to deceive them about the values he and his party’s base hold?

Harold Ford is a perfect example. He just wasn’t believable as a good ole boy Tennessean when he took conservative positions. He just didn’t seem real. The “not a real Tennessean” ad pointed up the discomfort that Ford’s overt appeal to the right aroused in Tennessee. It was perceived as sleazy, and the “Harold” ad pointed to it as well. The ads were racist in part, but they were more than just racist. It would be hard to imagine such ads directed at Barack Obama.

Which brings me to the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), which Harold Ford now heads.

My colleague, Glenn W. Smith, has pointed to the DLC strategy of getting as many “swing voters” as possible and the minimum number of base voters needed to win. That is why the DLC and Rahm Emanuel argued against Howard Dean’s 50-state strategy and for a swing-state alone strategy.

The DLC has concentrated on policy wonkishness (see their 100 new policy ideas on their web site), rather than values. Their concentration on laundry lists of policies rather than vision, values and passion has not helped Democrats electorally.

The reason the DLC has been attacking progressives, Smith argues, is that DLC members have major conservative values and are threatened by the progressive base. Some of those values are financial: Wall Street, the HMOs and drug companies, agribusiness, developers, the oil companies, and international corporations that benefit from trade agreements, outsourcing, cheap labor abroad, and practices that harm indigenous populations but bring profits. A powerful motivation for the party has been that, if they take such positions, they, like the Republicans, can get big money contributions from Wall Street.

But there is more involved here than money. The DLC seems also to share the foreign policy idea that we should be maximizing our “national interest” - our military strength, economic wealth (measured by gross domestic product, or GDP), and global political clout (presumably coming from economic and military

clout). This is opposed to a foreign policy that maximizes the well-being of people, both at home and abroad.

But worst of all, the DLC has been cowed by the conservatives. They have drunk the conservative Kool-Aid. As Harold Ford intimated in his debate with Markos Moulitsas: To win you have to be a hawk on foreign policy, a social conservative on abortion and gay marriage, and not raise taxes. Nonsense.

Even worse, Ford is suggesting that those in the party who don’t hold those views say that they do. There’s a name for someone who goes against his principles to pander for votes. It’s not a nice name.

In all the commentary about that debate, an important aspect has gone without comment. Markos certainly bested Ford. But to do so, he also had to best the moderator, David Gregory, who insisted on using the conservative-tainted word “liberal.” Over and over, Markos resisted Gregory’s frames. Gregory was not using Markos’s frames, and Markos insisted on his own.

It is important to stand up to the DLC, and to the idea that there is a unitary mainstream center, that they are it, and that progressives are extremists and deserve to be marginalized.

###

George Lakoff is Professor of Linguistics at the University of California, Berkeley. He previously taught at Harvard University and the University of Michigan. He has been a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford. Dr. Lakoff has published a multitude of articles in major scholarly journals and edited volumes. He is the author of the influential book, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, Second Edition, (2002). He is a senior fellow at the Rockridge Institute.

Smashing Capitalism

By Barbara Ehrenreich



Somewhere in the Hamptons a high-roller is cursing his cleaning lady and shaking his fists at the lawn guys. The American poor, who are usually tactful enough to remain invisible to the multi-millionaire class, suddenly leaped onto the scene and started smashing the global financial system. Incredibly enough, this may be the first case in history in which the downtrodden manage to bring down an unfair economic system without going to the trouble of a revolution.

First they stopped paying their mortgages, a move in which they were joined by many financially stretched middle class folks, though the poor definitely led the way. All right, these were trick mortgages, many of them designed to be unaffordable within two years of signing the contract. There were “NINJA” loans, for example, awarded to people with “no income, no job or assets.” Conservative columnist Niall Ferguson laments the low levels of “economic literacy” that allowed people to be exploited by sub-prime loans. Why didn’t these low-income folks get lawyers to go over the fine print? And don’t they have personal financial advisors anyway?

Then, in a diabolically clever move, the poor - a category which now roughly coincides with the working class — stopped shopping. Both Wal-Mart and Home Depot announced disappointing second quarter performances, plunging the market into another Arctic-

style meltdown. H. Lee Scott, CEO of the low-wage Wal-Mart empire, admitted with admirable sensitivity, that “it’s no secret that many customers are running out of money at the end of the month.”

I wish I could report that the current attack on capitalism represents a deliberate strategy on the part of the poor, that there have been secret meetings in break rooms and parking lots around the country, where cell leaders issued instructions like, “You, Vinny — don’t make any mortgage payment this month. And Caroline, forget that back-to-school shopping, OK?” But all the evidence suggests that the current crisis is something the high-rollers brought down on themselves.

When, for example, the largest private employer in America, which is Wal-Mart, starts experiencing a shortage of customers, it needs to take a long, hard look in the mirror. About a century ago, Henry Ford realized that his company would only prosper if his own workers earned enough to buy Fords. Wal-Mart, on the other hand, never seemed to figure out that its cruelly low wages would eventually curtail its own growth, even at the company’s famously discounted prices.

The sad truth is that people earning Wal-Mart-level wages tend to favor the fashions available at the Salvation Army. Nor do they have much use for Wal-Mart’s other departments, such as Electronics, Lawn and Garden, and Pharmacy.

It gets worse though. While with one hand the high-rollers, H. Lee Scott among them, squeezed the American worker’s wages, the other hand was reaching out with the tempting offer of credit. In fact, easy credit became the American substitute for decent wages. Once you worked for your money, but now you were supposed to pay for it. Once you could count on earning enough to save for a home. Now you’ll never earn that much, but, as the lenders were saying — heh, heh — do we have a mortgage for you!

Pay day loans, rent-to-buy furniture and exorbitant credit card interest rates for the poor were just the beginning. In its May 21st cover story on “The Poverty Business,” BusinessWeek documented the stampede, in just the last few years, to lend money to the people who could least afford to pay the interest: Buy your dream home! Refinance your house! Take on a car loan even if your credit rating sucks! Financiamos a Todos! Somehow, no one bothered to figure out where the poor were going to get the money to pay for all the money they were being offered.

Personally, I prefer my revolutions to be a little more pro-active. There should be marches and rallies, banners and sit-ins, possibly a nice color theme like red or orange. Certainly, there should be a vision of what you intend to replace the bad old system with — European-style social democracy, Latin American-style socialism, or how about just American capitalism with some regulation thrown in?

Global capitalism will survive the current credit crisis; already, the government has rushed in to soothe the feverish markets. But in the long term, a system that depends on extracting every last cent from the poor cannot hope for a healthy prognosis. Who would have thought that foreclosures in Stockton and Cleve-

land would roil the markets of London and Shanghai? The poor have risen up and spoken; only it sounds less like a shout of protest than a low, strangled, cry of pain.

Twenty Years of McKinney (what’s a mother to do)

By Paul Boden

It has now been over 20 years since the establishment of the 1987 Stewart B. McKinney Act, the federal government’s first and still most dominant program to alleviate homelessness for poor people in America. Why then do we still see so many homeless people on our streets? Or know about the “invisible homeless,” the individuals and families who have lost their homes and had to move in with others, sleep in cars or bounce from motel to shelter to hotel.

The short answer is because there is not enough housing. Since 1979, the federal government has reduced subsidized affordable housing by \$52 billion. Between 1996 and 2005, 100,000 public housing units have been lost and there has been zero funding for new public housing since 1996. When people can no longer afford the cost of housing, they must live without housing, they become “the homeless.”

But there is a longer answer. The Stewart McKinney act had its hands tied from the very beginning. It was never given the power to stem the growing tide of poor people newly created by cutbacks in federal agencies responsible for addressing poverty.

Here is how it worked. The last 20 years have seen massive cutbacks in the rolls for Social Security Insurance, widespread job losses through the North American Free Trade Agreement, a stagnant minimum wage still below poverty level, and other cuts to poverty programs. As financial support disappeared for more and more people, poverty spread, and at the same time HUD’s affordable housing programs were decimated. The McKinney legislation was never designed to deal with these underlying causes of homelessness. Or put another way, it was never designed to overcome these barriers to ending homelessness.

When McKinney was signed into law in 1987, emerging homelessness was just beginning to be recognized as a national issue. Local communities had already established emergency shelters and services, and many had set up task forces or councils to coordinate services and write plans.

It was in this environment that the McKinney Act was born. It first focused on the immediate emergency needs of homeless people in local communities – beds, blankets, and band aids. It did not regulate how long people had to be homeless to qualify. It did not require communities to discriminate between families and individuals. It did not pretend to be a housing program.

Over the years, however, and given the mushrooming numbers of poor people, McKinney applications have forced a variety of homeless subpopulations to compete

for woefully inadequate funds. For example, now HUD’s system for scoring community’s applications for McKinney funds are weighted in favor of housing “chronically homeless” individuals versus homeless families with children. In fact, HUD scores a community’s plan to create and success in creating permanent housing beds for people who are chronically homeless, but does not even require communities to include in its applications its strategies for creating permanent housing units for families with children and individuals who are not chronically homeless. Communities which are new to the McKinney funding world received no funding this year in part because they prioritized assisting families with children.

It has become a zero-sum game, with children, families, and single individuals competing against each other. As housing and services are made more available to one group, resources are drained from others. It is a classic example of robbing Peter to pay Paul. It shifts homelessness but has no chance whatsoever of ending it, and it puts cruel burdens on local communities.

July marked 20 years since passage of the McKinney Act. It has done some good for some people. But has it has not significantly reduced homelessness across the country. How could it? A \$1.4 billion a year homelessness budget cannot compensate for a \$52 billion a year reduction in affordable housing.

Its original name, the “Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act,” makes clear that it was never intended to be a comprehensive solution for homeless people. HUD has that responsibility, but cuts to HUD’s budget for affordable low-income housing have been relentless. Tinkering with McKinney to determine who wins and who loses accomplishes nothing toward ending homelessness. Nor, for that matter, will punitive new laws against panhandling or sleeping in public, or poverty courts that serve only to remove the more visible homeless people from public view.

Urgent relief is needed. What’s to be done? As a private citizen, what can you do?

- 1. You can insist that any candidate seeking your support explain how he or she would return McKinney to its “urgent relief” function for all homeless people, as originally intended.
- 2. You can insist that any candidate seeking your support explain how he or she would ensure that the federal departments of HUD, Health, Education, and Labor will revitalize programs that once served poor people. We need to get this country back to the days before so many people needed “urgent relief.”
- 3. You can write, e-mail, or call both your favored candidate and the Democratic National Committee and demand that a comprehensive plan to end mass homelessness in America be a mason plank in the Democratic Party Platform for 2008.

We need a true comprehensive federal government plan to take effect immediately. Think New Deal.

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Paul Boden is the executive director of the Western Regional Advocacy Network.

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PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday, October 2 • 6 PM
National Women’s Political Caucus meeting at Toledo’s at 367 E. Shaw (Shaw and Fresno St.), Dinner is \$15. Speaker: Elizabeth Egan.

Tuesday, October 2
Candle Light Vigil for World Peace at Sunset, Peace Garden at CSU-Fresno. Contact Dr. Kapoor at 435-2212 for additional information and if you would like to participate in the program.

Wednesday, October 3 • 4 PM
“Circle for Justice and Peace” Members of various Peace & Justice organizations will discuss their ideas about that topic. Meeting at the office of Dr. Ali Rezapour MD, 6769 N. Fresno St., #204 – SW corner Fresno & Herndon. For Info: 353-3952

Thursday, October 4
The first Fresno Cultural Arts Conference will be held in Downtown Fresno in the Cultural Arts District. For more information contact Cynthia Cooper, Executive Director, Fresno Coalition for Arts, Science & History, 1544 Van Ness Avenue, Fresno, CA 93721 (559) 286-8282 <http://www.fcash.org>

Thursday, October 4 • 5 PM
Art Hop Reception at the C.A.F.E. Infoshop, 935 F street ChinaTown Fresno. “Out of The Garden” Paintings by Margaret Hudson. Also “Pieces From the Road” works By Molly Brown.

Friday, October 5 • 5:15 PM
Cineculture present the film Born into Brothels: Calcutta’s Red Light Kids (2004). Directed by Ross Kauffman and Zana Briski. 85 min. (Bengali and English, w/English subtitles). Rated R for strong language. Born into Brothels is the winner of the 77th annual Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature. Post-screening discussant: Joan Sharma (Associate Professor, Art Department, Fresno State). This film will be shown at McLane 121 on the CSUF campus. For further information about Cineculture contact Dr. Denise Blum (advisor) dblum@csufresno.edu

Friday, October 5 • 6:30 - 8:30 PM
The Reedley Peace Center will presents: The Great Dictator This is possibly the most well-known of Charlie Chaplin’s films. When it was produced it was a timely satire on Nazisim and fascism in general, and Adolph Hitler in particular. In it, Charlie Chaplin plays a double role — Adenoid Hynkel, autocratic dictator of Tomania who blames the Jewish people for all of society’s ills, and a Jewish Barber who happens to be the spitting image of Hynkel.
Light potluck at 6:30. Program begins at 7 pm. This event is sponsored by the Reedley Peace Center and will be held at the Fellowship Hall of First Mennonite Church, on ‘L’ street between 12th and 13th streets in Reedley. Admis-

sion is free. Contact Don Friesen by email at dfriesen0@gmail.com

Saturday, October 6 • 8 AM - 3 PM
Fresno Center for Nonviolence FCNV Annual Book Sale, Parking Lot, SW Corner Olive & Van Ness. Start NOW sorting and donating your Books, Videos, DVDs & CDs. They will be sold for various prices. You may bring donations to the Center during open hours, M–F, 11:00 AM to 3 PM. For information call 237-3223. Also, volunteers needed on October 6.

Saturday, October 6 • 10 AM (registration starts at 7:30 AM)
2007 AIDS Walk. The AIDS Walk is about many things, one of course is raising funds, but it’s also about the being part of the compassionate sea of people who take action and walk beginning and ending at Roeding Park. See story on page 9.

Sunday, October 7 • 2 - 4 PM
Cuba: Myth and Reality. A report back to the community by Fresnans who went to Cuba this summer with Pastors for Peace and the Venceremos Brigade. Presenters will include Gerry Bill, Tony Bracamonte, and Simone Whalen-Rhodes. The presentation will include pictures, slides, and personal experiences. This event will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno, 2672 E. Alluvial.

Monday, October 8 • 7 - 8:30 PM
A Century of Mind Control: Implications for our lives in the 21st Century. See page 12 for more details.

Wednesday, October 10 • 12 Noon & 7 PM
“Salud” - [“Health”] A film about the Cuban medical school depicted in “Sicko” by Michael Moore will be shown at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness (Across from Fresno City College * SE Corner Van Ness & McKinley * Entrance on Van Ness). For more information call 559-23PEACE 559-237-3223, visit: www.centerfornonviolence.org or email info@centerfornonviolence.org

Wednesday, October 10 • 6 PM
The Central California Criminal Justice Committee (CCCJC) meeting. Rebeca Rangel will report back from the national meeting of NACOLE (National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement. All who are interested are invited to attend. This event will be held at the Sarah McCardle room in the downtown library (Mariposa and N street).

Thursday, October 11
2007 Fresno Faith & Mental Health Symposium: Spirituality and Mental Health as Partners in the Journey to Wellness and Recovery. For more information and/or to receive a brochure, contact NAMI Fresno at 559.224.2469

Friday, October 12
Indigenous Peoples Day. For more information, see: <http://www.red-coral.net/Pow.html> <http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=05/10/10/1335225> http://www.calendarmine.com/Holidays/American_IndigenousPeopleDay.asp

Friday, October 12 • 5 PM and 8 PM
Fresno Filmworks presents “12:08 East of Bucharest” at the Tower Theatre. Winner of the Camera d’Or prize at the Cannes Film Festival, this deadpan comedy from Romania takes a sly look at how the revolution to end Communist rule is remembered. In Romanian, with English subtitles. This month’s film is sponsored by Fresno Cohousing. Tickets can be purchased at the Tower Theatre Box Office, 815 E. Olive Ave., The Movies, 1435 N. Van Ness Ave., WineStyles in Fig Garden Village, and at the door, for \$10; \$8, for students and seniors. Tickets can also be purchased online through PayPal at www.fresnofilmworks.org. For more information call the FFW info line, 221-0755, or go to www.fresnofilmworks.org.

October 12 & 13
EMILY’s List’s Political Opportunity Program (POP) helps pro-choice Democratic women run and win for state and local office. But POP doesn’t stop there – POP seeks out and asks qualified pro-choice Democratic women to run for office. In 2006, POP held 22 trainings in 17 states, and trained a total of 773 people. To learn more about EMILY’s List and the Political Opportunity Program....Contact Michelle Stephenson, mstephenson@emilyslist.org, for more information on this training which will be held in Fresno.

Sunday, October 14 • 1 - 4 PM
Fresno Cohousing presents: Living Lightly, Finding Simplicity in a Complex World. This event, featuring Jon Myhre, co-author of Get Satisfied: How Twenty People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough, will be held at the Woodward Park Library at 944 East Perrin Avenue near Champlain. For more information see page3.


Wednesday, October 17 • 10 AM - 2 PM
Our Issues, Our Voices: Communities of Color Advocating for Health. A public speaking workshop for those who want to become a more effective health advocate. For more information go to: www.cpehn.org

Wednesday, October 17 • 7 PM
Does Fresno Need an Independent Police Auditor? A forum will be held involving people of different points of view (Police Chief, Fresno Police Officers Association, IPA from San Jose, Betty Harmon, H Spees are possible participants). The Forum does not advocate a position, but is an attempt to bring the issue before the public, an attempt to enlighten people about the position of IPA, what it would do, etc. It is to be an open forum rather than an advocacy

Jacob M. Weisberg
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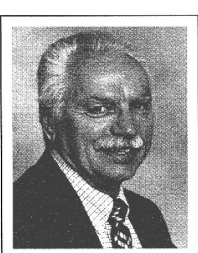
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meeting, so groups and people can take part as sponsors even if they are not already committed to this goal. This event will be held at Pacific University For more information, contact Ellie Bluestein at ellieb28@sbcglobal.net

Thursday, October 18 • 3 PM

The Community Media Access Collaborative (CMAC) will hold its annual meeting at the Cornerstone Conference Center, 1545 Fulton Street, in downtown Fresno. Individuals and community organizations are invited to learn about the benefits of public access media as a viable communications vehicle for their agency, service or message throughout our community and how they can assist CMAC in bringing this vital resource to Fresno County. CMAC is a volunteer, nonprofit corporation established to support, promote, produce and distribute noncommercial, community-based media programs created by local citizens, nonprofit groups, students, cultural organizations, and others. Board members represent business, education, arts, faith, multicultural, nonprofit and government sectors. There is no cost to attend this meeting. For more information, contact Roberta Barton at 488-1922.

Thursday, October 18 • Doors open at 6:30 PM. Video at 7 PM., Discussion at 7:40 PM.

Progressive Thursday and the Fresno Center for Nonviolence Prison Ministry will present the 37 minute video “Charisse Shumate: Fighting for Our Lives” and guest speaker Maria Telesco. See and hear testimony of what life is like for 4,300 inmates in the Women’s Correctional Facility in Chowchilla. Without condoning their crimes, some outsiders give some modicum of human dignity and basic quality of life via a project of compassion. Learn about the Goodie Bags Project—become a part of something good! This event is free, wheelchair accessible, and open to anyone interested in learning about this compassionate program to improve the quality of life for women prisoners at Chowchilla. Contacts: Larry Mullen 559 227-0293, Maria Telesco 559 255-9492, or the Fresno Center for Nonviolence 559 237-3223.

Thursday, October 18 • 8 PM

Inner Ear Poetry Jam at Full Circle Brewing \$5.-cover, 620 F St. Downtown Fresno 559-264-6323 www.fullcirclebrewing.com

Friday, October 19 • 4:30 PM

Healthy Gardening for People, Pets and the Environment! Annie Joseph, a leading expert on healthy gardening will be at the UC Merced Center a on 550 E. Shaw Avenue, Fresno CA, 93710.

Friday, October 19 • 5:15 PM

Cineculture present the film The Education of Shelby Knox (2005) Directed by Marion Lipschutz and Rose Rosenblatt.

76 min. Not rated. Post-screening discussant: Patsy Montgomery (Fresno Planned Parenthood Mar Monte Public Affairs Director). This film will be shown at McLane 121 on the CSUF campus.

Saturday, October 20 • 11:30 AM

Annie Joseph (see Oct 19 calendar item) will give a hands on presentation at the Garden of the Sun in the Discovery Center, 1944 N. Winery Ave., about making a worm bin for any home gardener who would like to come.

Saturday, October 20 • 3:30-5:00 PM

Possible Fresno mayoral candidate Ashley Swearingen is the keynote speaker at the October meeting of the Central Valley Progressive PAC being held at the Fresno Center for Non-Violence at 1586 N. Van Ness, Fresno. Swearingen is a leading expert on job creation in Fresno. Come hear what is being done to help create living wage jobs in Fresno and her views on local issues. For more information go to: www.cvppac.org

Tuesday, October 23 • 8 PM

Poetry in Motion: A Fundraiser to Inspire and Motivate Change. This gathering is a benefit for KFCF with a portion of the proceeds being donated to the New Orleans chapter of ACORN a nationwide non-profit organization dedicated to rebuilding homes for the cities low to moderate income residents. This event will be held at the Starline, located at 833 Fern Street in the Tower District. Tickets are \$10 for this 18 and over events. For more information call 233-2221.

Wednesday, October 24 • 6 - 9 PM

Take “Back the Night” at the CSUF Campus Free Speech Area. For more information see: <http://www.takebackthenight.org/>

Thursday, October 25 • 12 Noon - 1 PM

Women in Black vigil (for peace) at CSUF in the Free Speech area on the speakers platform.

Friday, October 26 • 5:15 PM

Cineculture present the film The A-bomb (2006) Directed by Amir Huda. Post-screening discussant: Film director, Amir Huda (Associate Professor, Physics Dept., Fresno State). This film will be shown at McLane 121 on the CSUF campus.

Friday, October 26 • 7 - 9 PM

Title IX Community Forum at the Unitarian-Universalist Church of Fresno located at 2672 E. Alluvial, Fresno (1/4 m. west of Willow Ave.) Title IX prohibits schools receiving federal monies from discriminating on account of gender. Speakers include Title IX expert Diane Milutinovich, attorney Dan Siegel, and representatives from high school and college levels. Great opportunity to learn what Title IX covers and requires. Handout information will be pro-

vided. Admission is free and open to the public.

Friday October 26 • 8 PM

Halloween Costume Party With Tempest Celtic Rock \$15.-cover at Full Circle 620 F St. Downtown Fresno 559-264-6323 www.fullcirclebrewing.com

Saturday, October 27 • 7:30 AM

Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure Rallies Fresno Teams. Start getting your team ready for the 9th annual Komen Fresno Race for the Cure at Fresno State. For more information go to www.komen-fresno.org or call (559) 229-4255.

Monday, October 29 • 6:30 PM

New Documentary Explores Coming Demise of the American Lifestyle. Filmmakers Will be on Hand for Special Fresno Screening. What a Way to Go: Life at the End of Empire, a feature-length documentary, will be screened at the Vineyard Farmer’s Market (located at 100 W. Shaw). The film will be followed by a dialogue with the filmmakers, who are including Fresno in their tour of the Western U.S. Suggested donation: \$10 (for the filmmakers). For reviews, trailers, or more information visit www.whatawaytogomovie.com

Thursday, November 1 • No-host Bar at 6:30 PM, Dinner served at 7:00 PM, Program begins 7:30 PM

Women’s Equality Day Dinner, “Spotlighting Medical Leaders” will be held at Pardini’s at 2257 W. Shaw Ave., Fresno, CA 93711. Featured Honorees: Dr. Helen Jones, Dr. Michael Moffett, Dr. Gayle Newell, viki Wilson, R.N.

Friday, November 2 • 5:15 PM

Cineculture present the film Bowling for Columbine (2002) Directed by Michael Moore. 120 min. Rated R for some violent images and language. In this Oscar-winning documentary, Moore’s discussions with various people, including South Park co-creator Matt Stone, the National Rifle Association’s then-president Charlton Heston, and musician Marilyn Manson, he seeks to explain why the Columbine massacre occurred and why the United States has a higher number of violent crimes, especially crimes involving guns. The film looks into the nature of violence in the United States, focusing on guns as a symbol of both American freedom and its self-destruction. Post-screening discussant: Joe Parks (CSUF Professor, Kremen School of Education). This film will be shown at McLane 121 on the CSUF campus.

Friday, November 2

“Welcome Home Concert,” Holly Near & Max Bennett Parker, UU Church of Fresno, 2672 East Alluvial. Time and Ticket Info: Stephen Mintz @ 360-9515

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Professor Erin Buzuvis joined the faculty at Western New England College School of Law in 2006. After graduating from Cornell Law School in 2001, she practiced environmental and land use law at Goodwin Procter LLP in Boston. She then clerked for the Honorable Thomas L. Ambro of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. Professor Buzuvis has published articles about Title IX and college athletics. Her most recent research centered on cultural understandings of Title IX and sports is forthcoming in the *William and Mary Journal of Women and Law*. She has been a featured commentator on *Justice Talking* and *Democracy Now*.

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Central California Democratic Convention Victory 2008 Making the Difference

Saturday, November 10, 2007

Fresno, California

Fresno County Plaza Bldg., 2220 Tulare Street 93741

This will be a full day event. All registered Democrats are invited. All of the Democratic Presidential candidates are invited. All Democratic candidates are invited. Organization tables and vendors are invited. Basic individual pre-registration will be \$30 and \$10 for students (late registration will be \$10 more). Lunch and dinner will be available as optional extras.

The focus will be on organization development to facilitate precinct operations for voter registration and "Get Out the Vote" in 2008 as well as the State of the Central Valley, the State, and the Union.

Hosted by

The Fresno County Democratic Central Committee
Co-sponsored by **the Kings, Tulare, Kern, Madera County**
Democratic Central Committees

PO Box 1121, Clovis CA 93613 (559) 292-4905

www.fcdcc.org Email: jayhubbell@comcast.net

Make checks payable to the Fresno County Democratic Central Committee

Peace Fresno Moves on

By Bill Simon

By the time this goes to press, Peace Fresno will have a new president and a new board. Granted it will largely be a reshuffle of those already on the board, but my year as president will have drawn to a close. And it has been a very rewarding year for me.

Granted, nobody likes meetings; and ours are never standing room only. It would be great if more people could endure meetings once in a while and perhaps even serve on a future board. New people always bring new ideas and a fresh look at things. And that's important to keep an organization vibrant.

But Peace Fresno members are into "doing something"; and I am grateful for the fantastic participation by Peace Fresno members and other members of the community in Peace Fresno activities during the past year. The turnout for everything from sign making to Counter Recruitment high school visits to the Dixie Chicks demonstration to 'Santas for Peace' to an awesome Rally in the Valley made me appreciate every one of you and the willingness of so many people to work so hard and to suffer so much cold and heat. 109 degrees at the Peace Corner in July and August was awesome dedication by so many!

Perhaps the best development during the year was the increased cooperation between various groups. This included the founding of an area Peace Coalition, the overwhelming number of groups who participated in the Rally in the Valley, the joint project of WILPF, Moveon, and Peace Fresno to picket at Rep Costa's office almost daily in September and the statewide coalition of peace groups to organize 'California Calling' and a Regional Peace Conference to be held in Sacramento later in October.

Undoubtedly, a new funding bill for the Iraq Occupation will pass just about the time you read this. But your hard work during the past year means it's not a sure thing. And, with redoubled effort, we will end the occupation soon. Thank you.

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Bill Simon is the immediate past president of Peace Fresno. www.peacfresno.org 487-2515

PEACE SURGE



Local peace groups have united to change Democratic Congressman Jim Costa's position on the war/occupation of Iraq. This is the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom on the first day of a series of demonstrations held at his office in September.

Local Peace Groups Target Costa

By Mike Rhodes

Peace groups in the Fresno area targeted Democratic Congressman Jim Costa last month. They were attempting to get Costa to change his position on the war/occupation of Iraq by voting to cut off funding. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), MoveOn.org, Codepink, and Peace Fresno worked together to pressure Costa to vote NO on the September bill to continue funding the occupation of Iraq. Each group took one day a week to rally their members in a demonstration front of Costa's office.

On the first day of the protests Jean Hays, the chairperson of WILPF, delivered a statement to the District Director of Costa's office, Chris Rosander. The statement said that "pro-war senators and representatives are wasting billions of taxpayers' dollars on the Iraq war, a war that cannot be won. The costs are increasing and there is no end in sight. Despite recent reports to the contrary, the Bush administration's endless war is taking a huge toll on our military, military families, and local communities." The statement said that taxpayers in Costa's district have paid \$602 million to fund the Iraq war.

About two dozen protestors were on the sidewalk in front of Costa's office in downtown Fresno (across from the Exhibit Hall). The Raging Grannies joined the protestors and sang songs of peace. Shortly before 1 PM about a dozen protestors decided to go into Costa's office and deliver their anti-war message directly to the staff (Costa was not in Fresno that day). The arrival of the demonstrators in the Congressman's office seemed to catch the staff off guard. The protestors were asked to wait until Rosander was free to meet with them. During the 30 minute wait, the Raging Grannies practiced their songs, including one they wrote especially for Costa.

Rosander greeted all of the protestors and listened as each person explained why they were against the war. Several people demanded that Costa vote against approving any more funding for the war/occupation of Iraq. Rosander did not make any commitments about how Costa might vote, but he did say that he would deliver the protestors anti-war message to the Congressman.

Day 2

Peace Fresno president Bill Simon delivered a letter to representative Costa that said "the 262 active members of Peace Fresno and the 911 friends of Peace Fresno,

many of them your constituents, demand that you vote against any further funding for the Iraq occupation so that, as a nation, we may begin the process of restorative justice."

This was the second day of demonstrations that were held at Congressman Costa's office last month. Near the end of the demonstration, Rosander released a statement from the Congressman about the war. Bill Simon read the statement to the anti-war activists. Costa's statement said "Today, Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) released the following statement regarding yesterday's House Foreign Affairs and Armed Services joint committee hearing retarding Iraq.

Yesterday's hearing with General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker was a good update for my colleagues and me on Iraq.

But it left many things unanswered. I have submitted questions to both of them regarding a new course now that we have lost the majority support of the American public and much of the world community is troubled by our presence there.

I am concerned that we heard nothing yesterday of an exit strategy – an issue we in Congress are wrestling with on a bipartisan basis.

We need a clear plan, rather than a continued wait-and-see approach. This plan should include redeployment and a stronger diplomatic effort with all factions within Iraq, as well as Iraq's neighbors to help foster reconciliation in the Middle East.

My staff and I meet regularly with individuals and groups – especially on issues as emotional as the Middle East.

Some people I talk to want to pretend we never went to Iraq. Others are equally convinced that we should never leave.

As for me, I have spent considerable time in that region. And I have seen first hand what a mess the Administration has made there.

While I believe that the next administration will ultimately have to fix the problem, I am committed to finding positive bi-partisan options as soon as possible.

But as we work toward a solution, we cannot forget the realities of the entire region. We cannot forget our obligations to our country, to our troops and to the innocent victims of the war who live there.

I will continue to keep an open mind and continue to listen to all points of view as situations and conditions change." End of Costa's statement.

Peace Fresno
P. O. Box 5115
Fresno, CA 93755
559-487-2515
president@peacefresno.org
www.peacefresno.org

1st Friday of every month
4:30–6:30 PM
Peace Fresno is at Shaw and Blackstone Avenues to protest the occupation of Iraq and other harmful domestic and foreign policies of the Bush administration. Peace Fresno advocates alternatives to war and social and environmental justice. For more information go to www.peacefresno.org

Every Tuesday
7 PM
Peace Fresno meets at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at 1584 N Van Ness, south of McKinley. If you want to help stop Bush's endless war against the world, come to this meeting!

For an up-to-the-minute listing of all peace actions in the Fresno area, call the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at (559) 23PEACE (237–3223). For more information about Peace Fresno, call 487–2515 or visit their Web site at www.peacefresno.org

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Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
P.O. Box 5114
Fresno, CA 93755
Ph. (559) 658-8260
skyhorse3593@sbcglobal.net
<http://www.fresnoalliance.com/wilpf/>

4th Monday of every month
7 PM
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting, 1584 N Van Ness, south of McKinley. For more information contact JEAN HAYS skyhorse3593@sbcglobal.net

This is the letter from Peace Fresno to Democratic congressman Jim Costa:

Rep Jim Costa
855 M St
Fresno, CA

Representative Costa:
On September 10, General Petraeus told Congress that we can succeed in Iraq if we just stay longer. Others argue that we should stay in or leave Iraq depending on how they think the war is going.

These arguments miss the point. The US has by far the largest military budget in the world, the largest military force in the world, and the largest stockpile of both conventional and nuclear weapons in the world. If we wanted to wipe Iraq or any other nation off the face of the earth next week, we could do it

No, the point has always been that this has never been a war between two armies. Time has made it clear that the only reasons to invade and occupy Iraq are to pass the Iraq Oil Sharing Bill and to force our version of capitalist government on another nation. This invasion and occupation has been immoral, unjust, and illegal since its inception.

We were wrong to invade Iraq. If we were wrong four years ago, we are still wrong today. Consequently, as a country we will perhaps never again be able to reclaim the moral high road.

The 262 active members of Peace Fresno and the 911 friends of Peace Fresno, many of them your constituents, demand that you vote against any further funding for the Iraq occupation so that, as a nation, we may begin the process of restorative justice.

Peace,

Bill Simon
President, Peace Fresno

For more information about MoveOn.org, contact Nancy Griesser at (559) 325-1616 or email her at nancyg@csufresno.edu.