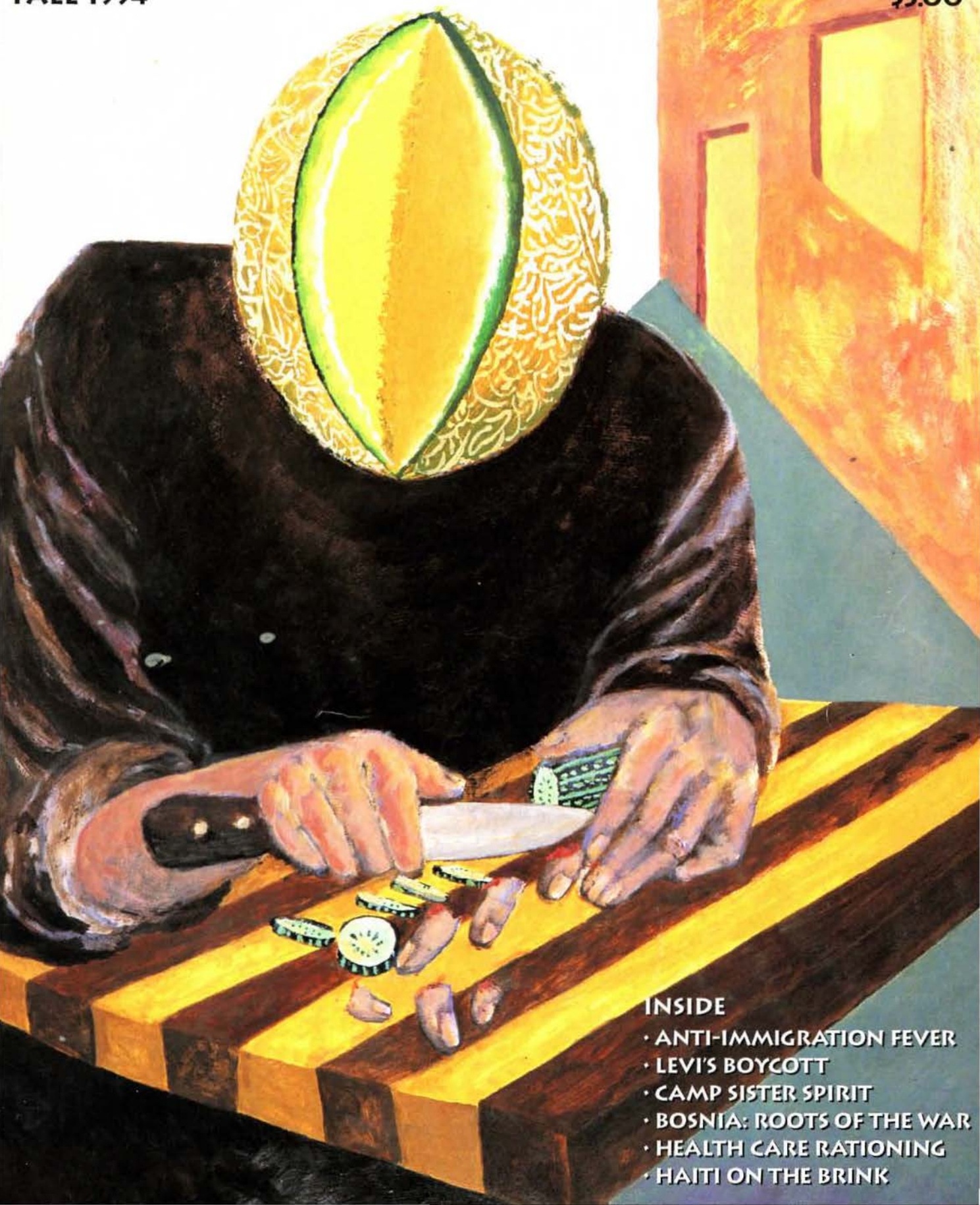


BREAKTHROUGH

FALL 1994

\$3.00



INSIDE

- ANTI-IMMIGRATION FEVER
- LEVI'S BOYCOTT
- CAMP SISTER SPIRIT
- BOSNIA: ROOTS OF THE WAR
- HEALTH CARE RATIONING
- HAITI ON THE BRINK

Breakthrough, the political journal of Prairie Fire Organizing Committee (PFOC), is published by the John Brown Education Fund, PO Box 14422, San Francisco, CA 94114, ©1994 JBEF.

Editorial Collective:

Barbara Barnett, Camomile,
Terry Forman, Les Gottesman,
Judith Mirkinson, and Sally Thomas.
Volume XVIII, no. 2, whole no. 26.
Press date: November 15, 1994.

You can write to PFOC c/o:

Atlanta: PO Box 2434
Decatur, GA 30031-2434

Chicago: Box 253
2520 N. Lincoln
Chicago, IL 60614

San Francisco: PO Box 14422,
San Francisco, CA 94114

Our address on the information
superhighway is pfoc@igc.apc.org.

Subscriptions are available from the
SF address. \$10 individual/\$15
institutions and overseas (surface
mail)/four issues.



Printed on Recycled Paper

Front cover:

"Finger Food" ©1994 by Terry Forman, a San Francisco Bay Area lesbian artist/activist. She has been a member of *Breakthrough's* design and production team since 1977 and was a founding member and leading designer of the Fireworks Graphics collective. "In 1986 I learned I had a brain tumor. 'Finger Food' is a part of a series of paintings that explores this experience as well as that of my subsequent brain surgeries."

Back cover:

"Have You Seen Me?" was a project developed by artists Larry and Kelly Sultan with students from Bahia Vista School in San Rafael, Calif., and sponsored by a local non-profit, Public Arts Works. Four children's faces and autobiographies were printed on shopping bags for a small grocery chain. Distributed during an election campaign that featured the vicious anti-immigrant Prop. 187, this story by a nine-year-old Salvadoran boy became a focus for protest and debate that reached the national media. Phone calls, letters, and visits from people who supported the boy and the project overcame the threats of a few anti-immigration voices. For more information on this project, call Public Arts Works at (415) 457-9744.

1 EDITORIAL: PUT YOUR LEFT FOOT FORWARD

2 501 BLUES: BOYCOTT LEVI'S

by Pamela Chiang

8 HEALTH CARE RATIONING: THE SLIPPERY SLOPE

by Jimmy Emerman

12 ACROSS THE BORDERLINE

14 THE POPULAR POLITICS OF IMMIGRANT BASHING

interview with Lina Avidan

18 SMALLVILLE STRIKES BACK

by Bill Tamayo

20 WOMEN IMMIGRANTS: DOWN BY LAW

by Equal Rights Advocates

21 UnFAIR

by Steven Rendall

43 NO HUMAN BEING IS ILLEGAL

Immigrant Rights Action Pledge

23 CLOSE-UP IN BLACK AND WHITE

edited by Scott Braley

28 BOSNIA: AS THE WORLD TURNS ITS BACK

by Timothy Pershing

34 POUNDS FOR MONEY

poem by Arl Spencer Nadel

36 SISTER SPIRIT

interview with Brenda and Wanda Henson

44 LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

46 HAITI ON THE BRINK

interview with Max Blanchet

48 WRITE THROUGH THE WALLS

PUT YOUR LEFT FOOT FORWARD

The spin doctors will be talking about the 1994 election for years to come. The pundits have already decided: the Democratic party was just too liberal—out of touch with the electorate. Hearing this, we wonder: are we talking about the same Democratic party—you know, the one that was incapable of passing health-care reform and that just passed the most repressive crime bill in history? One that offered no alternative—that in many cases was virtually indistinguishable from the Republicans? A Democratic party that has only responded to the right by moving continually in that direction and that has hardly been challenged from the left at all.

Clearly the right wing rules the rhetoric—and that means they can set the political agenda. Calls for more executions, prisons, and police fueled an election based on fear and hatred. Leading the way for the rest of the nation, California's politicians made punishing "illegal aliens" (read: immigrants of color) their battle cry. Governor Pete Wilson rallied for two particularly loathsome, racist, and fascistic California propositions—the anti-immigrant 187 and the three-strikes-you're-out 184—to get re-elected.

The propositions passed overwhelmingly. The day after the election Governor Wilson signed an executive order denying prenatal care to "illegal" pregnant women. There were reports from Southern California that principals were standing outside their schools demanding immigration papers from parents and students. Clinics reported an overwhelming drop in patients, blaming people's fears of being turned over to the INS. At the same time three school boards and the newly-elected state superintendent of schools went to court to block Proposition 187, while health workers sought to reassure patients that they would be treated.

For appalled progressives, the election should serve as a wake-up call. We thought we could sit back and let history run its course while we ran our lives. Clearly we can't. The despair, cynicism and apathy that has enveloped so many of us has to be confronted and replaced with the realization that we simply cannot let the right wing—which *is* well organized—further institutionalize racism and fascism. Although the propositions passed, the work involved in the campaigns against them can serve as a beginning. When the threat of Proposition 187 sunk in last spring, organizing against it started on a mass level. Thousands of teachers, health workers, and social-service providers signed a pledge of non-compliance with the bill. They advertised their resistance in the *New York Times*. Over 60,000 people demonstrated in Los Angeles. Building on work started two years ago in high schools and colleges, the Chicano Moratorium led student walk-outs all over the state. The day after the election thousands of students again walked out.

Although there were some coalition efforts to defeat both propositions, the same level of organizing did not happen around Proposition 184—a latter-day version of "off with their heads" hysteria. The three-strikes law would lock up for life anyone convicted of a third felony, whether violent or non-violent. It calls for 20 new prisons in California—which already has more prisons, 28, than most nations! Despite the common racist scapegoating of Latinos and African Americans that underpins these two propositions, few progressive whites were willing to risk alienating white voters by linking the issues. Any future organizing will have to deal with both crime and immigration.

These two propositions in California are just the beginning. The right wing nationwide has its eyes on the outcome of these initiatives. Copycat bills and initiatives will spring up in state after state. That's the right-wing agenda—not one of ill-conceived propositions that respond poorly to real problems, but a systematic racist, repressive onslaught aimed at people of color, based on lies. That's the truth we can't forget and that we will have to tell again and again. □

501B

by Pamela Chiang



photo: Fuerza Unida (above)



'BOYCOTT LEVI'S, BOYCOTT LEVI'S!" VIOLA Casares leading a rally, stood in front of Levi Plaza—the world headquarters of Levi Strauss & Co., the mighty blue-jean giant. Mother of three daughters and a son, grandmother of eight, widowed, and caregiver of an ill father, Casares is one of many women who have established themselves in San Francisco to expose Levi's treatment of garment workers.

Viola is here with *Fuerza Unida*, an organization of ex-Levi's garment workers from the closed San Antonio plant in Texas, who are fighting back and demanding justice. On January 16, 1990, Levi Strauss & Co. broke federal plant-closing law by shutting down their largest factory in San Antonio, Texas, without prior warning to the employees. Workers were called to the center of the plant and told by Levi's that "with sorrow in their hearts" they would have to shut down in "order to stay competitive." The sudden notice left 1,150 workers, predominantly Mexican and Mexican-American women, without jobs. The message came as a shock to the garment workers, many of whom had served the company diligently for in some cases up to 30 years. One woman fainted on the concrete floor of the plant. All had been assured just a month before that 1990 would be a year of "a lot of work." Upon return from the holiday, just after many workers had purchased gifts with great confidence that the upcoming year's work would help pay off the expenses, Levi's announced the plant closing.

The immediate and unexpected job loss had devastating consequences. Many workers lost their homes, had their cars repossessed, and their utilities shut off. In some cases, three families had to move in together under one roof. Some went into institu-

tions, others had heart attacks, and one worker committed suicide. Even today, the effects of the plant closing pierce through the lives of the ex-Levi's garment workers. One former worker has housed herself through local women's shelters.

In spite of the fact that the women were not organized nor had any organizing experience, they pulled themselves together and met inside a local church on San Antonio's working-class South Side. The women had many questions and concerns: "Could the company really do this? What about pensions? Was it right that so many were injured at work?" Community organizations like the Southwest Public Workers' Union provided both information and encouragement. Very quickly the women organized themselves into their own organization. After a series of meetings, *Fuerza Unida* was born in February 1990 and has consistently held meetings every Thursday night for nearly five years. Made up of the majority of the former Levi's garment workers, *Fuerza Unida* has organized itself to demand justice from Levi's in the form of pay owed to the 1,150 workers and to expose Levi's false image of social responsibility. *Fuerza Unida* has maintained an international boycott of all Levi's products—Levi's, Dockers, and Britannia jeans—and are demanding that Levi's pay them all that is owed (see box).

Viola, along with the other women of *Fuerza Unida*, is like many other working-class women all over the world who have jobs with little security or safety because large corporations can decide at any moment to shut down an operation and move elsewhere to make more money. In the case of Levi's, they packed up the entire plant and moved it to Costa Rica where they pay workers less than four dollars a day.

The Haas family, direct descendants of Levi Strauss, reacquired the corporation in 1985 through a classic leveraged buyout. Since then, many operations have moved offshore to *maquiladoras*. Between 1985 and 1990, the Haas family has ordered the closure of 26 U.S. plants, laying off over 10,000 workers, mostly women of color. The San Antonio closing came just after a posting of record profits of \$272 million at the end of 1989. Levi's sales and profits have soared. In 1993, the family company took home an all-time record profit of nearly half-a-billion dollars. The work conditions inside the plants, along with subsequent closings, have all been part of an effort to shrink the workforce to fit their profits.

Multinational manufacturers "shop around" constantly for places to set up business as part of the downward harmonization spawned by the GATT (General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs) and NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement). The corporate strategy is based on not staying in one place for very long in order to avoid the development of workers' organizations that will organize for basic needs such as fair wages, pension plans, paid holidays, and other worker benefits. The trade agreements allow corporations to walk away from injured workers and environmentally-poisoned communities. Part of the downward harmonization is to see who will take the lowest wages first; the rest of the downsizing process, it's assumed, will follow.

The script has been played out for the last 25 years,

beginning with talk about global plans for free trade between Henry Kissinger and corporate and government leaders in the Trilateral Commission, which authored the GATT and NAFTA. It's no accident that the Haas family and other members of Levi's board of directors have been involved in discussions on free trade dating back to the Nixon era. They've worked in association with other Fortune 500 companies such as the Bank of America and United Airlines, as well as groups such as the Rand Corporation, a major player in the military-industrial complex (which includes such institutions as the Pentagon and the CIA).

LEVI SPELLED CORRECTLY IS "EVIL"

Levi's likes to portray itself as a hip new company that produces terrific clothes, is great to its workers, and contributes altruistically to its community. Levi Strauss prides itself on giving thousands of dollars to AIDS organizations and battered women's shelters, and in sponsoring numerous cultural activities. As a result it has a liberal reputation and is defended as an example of what the modern corporation should be.

In reality, any talk of Levi's commitment to human rights and a healthy environment is fraught with lies and contradictions. Irene Reyna recounts her experience at Levi's: "Our work was time-based. The number of pieces we produced accounted for our earnings. Levi's rates were set so

Demonstration at Levi Plaza, San Francisco, June 28, 1994.



photo: Fuerza Unida

that we had to work fast and under high speeds; many of us got injured. The repetitive motion contributed to our injuries. Now, many of us can never stand on our feet for too long, we have limited mobility in our hands, arms, and throughout our bodies. Levi's has committed a crime by violating our human rights." Reyna is a mother of four and grandmother, and also one of three *Fuerza Unida* co-coordinators.

A 1992 Department of Labor investigation found Chinese laborers working in garment shops on the U.S. protectorate of Saipan in conditions reminiscent of indentured servitude. The workers' passports were confiscated and they worked 84-hour weeks at low wages. Even today, Levi's is paying teenage girls in Indonesia 58 cents an hour to work. While they claim these wages contribute to the family income, it's very clear that Levi's should be paying adults livable wages so parents can afford to put their children through school.

Like many clothing manufacturers, Levi's is also heavily involved in destroying the environment. One of the reasons people like Levi's denims and Dockers pants is because they're made from cotton. But people don't realize that cotton is one of the most heavily pesticide-sprayed products. In the cotton-producing states of California, Arizona, and Texas, airplane crop dusting is the usual form of pesticide application. Farmworkers and entire communities are doused with this toxic dust.

In the case of McFarland, California—a known cancer-cluster area—an entire community is sick with cancers, birth deformities, and illnesses caused by the pesticide spraying. It's no accident that most of the places affected by the spraying are communities of color, thus leaving people of color to be contaminated both on the job and at home.

If you've been to the men's casual section recently, you've probably seen the floor flooded with "wrinkle-free" cotton khaki slacks. Now we all know that cotton is naturally wrinkled. So it takes a lot to make it look pressed. The process Levi's uses involves exposing workers to extreme heat and toxic chemicals. Just a few months ago, a dozen or so workers were heavily doused with these chemicals and secretly hauled away to a hospital for treatment. Limited information on their health status has been revealed. Workers are silent about the incident because Levi's has intimidated them with threats of a shutdown.

Then there is the case of stonewashing. Those cool-looking Levi's or Silver Tab jeans come with a heavy environmental price tag. In order to get the stonewashed effect, jeans have to be washed with pumice stones that are obtained by open-pit mining, a process that leaves whole sections of the earth denuded. One such site where this takes place is in the Jemez Mountains in northern New Mexico, home of many Native-American pueblos.

WHAT LEVI'S OWES FUERZA UNIDA

* **SEVERANCE PAY:** Levi's artificially reduced the formula for determining severance pay by computing only the last months of production before the plant shut down. Levi's should have taken the annual average, which would have made the severance pay a lot higher and more reflective of the workers' production. Averages fell in the last months due to added tasks, lack of materials, broken machinery, and increased injuries.

* **PROFIT-SHARING:** Workers were not paid profit sharing for the last four months (January to April 1990) even though they were still employed by Levi's.

* **PENSION PAY:** In 1981, Levi Strauss & Co. bought the plant from the previous owner. Workers were told that things would remain the same and that all their work time would transfer. However, when the plant closed they did not receive credit for all the time worked. Levi's refused to pay or give them an answer about the pension.

* **VACATION AND HOLIDAY PAY:** Workers officially remained on Levi's payroll until April 1990, yet they did not receive vacation or holiday pay for the period between January and April 1990.

* **CHRISTMAS BONUS:** In November 1989, Levi's promised a raise starting January 1990, in lieu of the traditional \$500 Christmas bonus. Workers received neither the raise nor the bonus because Levi shut the plant down.

* **WORKER'S HEALTH:** In 1987, operations at the Zarzamora Street plant were shifted to the production of Dockers pants. Levi's had their mechanics saw off the sewing-machine tables leaving workers no place to rest the heavy material. This, combined with the intense production at a rate of one piece per second, caused a great number of injuries such as carpal-tunnel syndrome and herniated discs. A large number of the workers are left permanently injured and disabled without any health insurance and/or compensation.

LA MUJER LUCHANDO, EL MUNDO VA CAMBIANDO

Women in Struggle, Changing the World

Fuerza Unida started out dealing with the need to organize for corporate accountability. But in these four-and-a-half years the women have built relationships and networks and have begun to understand the world in a whole new way. The struggles of the pesticide-poisoned farmworkers is not far removed from their own struggle for workplace safety. Ana Maria Sanchez shares her thoughts: "In a way you could say that we are fighting the same giant. The company *patrones* just want to make lots of money at the expense of our health." Ana Sanchez herself is permanently injured with bone and tissue damage to her feet from rapid use of the machine foot pedals at Levi's.

Part of building empowerment comes from networking. When *Fuerza Unida* first heard about the layoff of over 200 Latina communication workers by long-distance-carrier Sprint's *La Conexion Familiar*, they went to share the similarity of their struggles and to encourage the Sprint workers. In mid-September, the Latino community won a decisive victory when the National Labor Relations Board sided 100 percent with the workers. Through affiliation with groups such as the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice, *Fuerza Unida* has networked with people-of-color communities and workers' organizations throughout six southwestern states and Mexico.

This single fight has transformed the lives of the *Fuerza Unida* women. The changes can be seen both at home and within the community. The struggle has demanded the attention of members on late weekday nights for meetings and on weekends for protests. The family responsibilities get shifted, with husbands and sons taking over cooking, cleaning, and caregiving. These changes do not always come easily—some families have broken up—but the transformation does happen. Petra Mata, one of the co-coordinators, no longer meets the image of a stereotypic non-working grandmother. She works long days and weekends to promote the struggle. "My family has been very supportive of me because it's their struggle, too. The future of our children and grandchildren is at stake because if we don't fight now, the same thing will happen to them. Besides, they can learn from our struggle and know how to exercise their rights," says Petra.

Fuerza Unida has been a home, a place for empowerment, a place the women can call their own. Without it, these changes and transformations would just affect an individual's personal situation. In this country people blame the victim and everything is based on the individual. Organizing and organization changes this around. That's what has been happening for four-and-a-half years. Having estab-

lished support and contacts from all over the world, these women have changed themselves and become an inspiration for others as well.

LA CAMPAÑA—CAMPAIGNING FOR JUSTICE

La Campaña involves a new phase in the organizing where *Fuerza Unida* members are working out of a newly-established San Francisco office near Levi's world headquarters. Here they hope to expose Levi's and the Haas family in their own home town. Through the Promotora Leadership Development Program (PLDP), centered in *La Campaña*'s strategy, the former garment workers are being trained as organizers.

Ana Maria had never seen a FAX machine before she came to San Francisco for the PLDP. In a matter of time she was sending out several press releases. Nearly eight women have gone through the PLDP, including Nellie Casas, whose mother, a former Levi's worker, is too ill to travel. "I've extended my training from six weeks to nearly three months and I feel really good about myself. This struggle is not just my mom's but also mine, as a young person, because what Levi's did will continue for future generations if we don't stop them," says 22-year-old Casas, who has sacrificed two semesters of college to contribute to *La Campaña*.

Virginia Castillo, one of *Fuerza Unida*'s *promotoras* (promoters) and former Levi's worker, has also gone through the PLDP. "At first I resisted doing anything because I was afraid, thinking that I couldn't type on the computer or talk on the phone. All my life, and even at work with Levi's, I've been told that I'm not smart enough. But through *La Campaña* I've learned a lot of things and especially that *Si Se Puede—Yes I Can!*" Castillo herself suffers from work-related injuries—carpal-tunnel syndrome, two herniated discs, and the muscular disease myasthenia gravis. In 1990 alone, Castillo had three operations. Slowly she has regained more strength but relies on expensive medications to continue functioning and moving. Castillo traveled to San Francisco where she has spent six solid weeks campaigning and exposing what Levi's has done to her and the other workers.

La Campaña was kicked off on May 2, 1994, with a press conference announcing the first *Fuerza Unida* member to leave for the San Francisco organizing initiative. Through rallies at the headquarters, candle light vigils at the Haas's home, and informational pickets and rallies in the communities, *Fuerza Unida* has been educating the Bay Area about Levi Strauss and other major corporations' labor practices. August 30 was the first of several National Days of Action in which demonstrations in six cities throughout the country, and internationally, joined in simultaneous protests at key Levi's targets. The "Days of Action" culminated with a hunger strike, a three-week spiritua-

fast, led by *Fuerza Unida* members with supporter participation. Starting on October 11, in commemoration of 502 years of resistance, supporters from all over fasted for at least one day, and as many as 21 days. In San Francisco, *Fuerza Unida* members and supporters camped out in Levi Plaza for the full 21 days. The final day, November 1—the eve of *El Día de Los Muertos* (Day of the Dead, a Mexican celebration of the dead when deceased loved ones are remembered)—was marked with protests in at least ten cities.

All of this has resulted in a great deal of media coverage including a front-page *S.F. Chronicle* story and interviews on the TV and radio. These are just the kinds of things that contribute to the tarnishing of Levi's image. But Levi's is fighting back—and fighting back where it hurts—in the community. Here is a struggle in which a major contributor to community causes is pitting Mexican women workers against other community concerns—like that of AIDS.

Unfortunately, racism, lack of consciousness about workers, and anti-worker sentiment contributes to this. Already community organizations have been threatened with the cutoff of funds if they support the boycott. In a period when privatization and government cutbacks make it essential for community groups to seek private and corporate funding, this becomes a real problem. But through dialogues and education, *Fuerza Unida* hopes to show that their victory is not just an isolated one, but something that could lead others to gain as well.

The coldest nightmare for the Haas family might be the victory of women who once were told they were “just an extension of the sewing machine.” This campaign can be won. It's the first time the garment workers have a clear chance of winning against the

world's largest clothing manufacturer (Levi's) and it's because of the no traditional organizing strategy. The worker empowerment, opportunity for supporter participation, and networking reinforces *Fuerza Unida* determination to fight for justice. As the women always say, “An injustice to one is an injustice to all!” And they follow that with, “*Si se puede*. It can be done!”

Pamela Chiang is an organizer with Fuerza Unida and co-chair of the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice.

Levi's factory,
El Paso, Texas.



photo: Brian Palmer/Impact Visuals

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE GARMENT WORKERS WIN!

STEP ONE

* **BOYCOTT LEVI'S:** Don't Buy Levi's, Dockers, Silver Tab, or Britannia jeans. If you have bought them, cut off the leather tab and send it back to Levi headquarters: Bob Haas, Levi Strauss & Co., 1155 Battery Street, San Francisco, CA 94111.

STEP TWO

* Join the “Days of Action”—national protests against Levi Strauss & Co.—and support the garment workers' justice campaign.

STEP THREE

* Get in touch with *Fuerza Unida* and sponsor a housemeeting so you and others can learn about the issues.

STEP FOUR

* Gather your friends, club, or organization and form a “Boycott Committee” of Levi Strauss & Co. products.

STEP FIVE

* Get a resolution passed in your union, organization, church, etc. supporting the boycott.

STEP SIX

* Write a check and help the cause!

For more information contact: *Fuerza Unida*, 3946 South Zaramora, San Antonio, TX 78225, Tel. (210) 927-2294, FAX (210) 927-2295; or PO Box 78210, San Francisco, CA 94140-0129, Tel. (415) 281-9996.

HEALTH CARE RATIONING

THE SLOPE SLIPPERY

By JIMMY EMERMAN

photo: Impact Visuals/Earl Dotter



RATIONED HEALTH CARE? FOR ME, USED TO thinking of health care as a human right, the thought is abhorrent—perhaps doubly so because I work with an organization whose mission is to improve the lives of older people and their families.

And yet...I frequently find myself seduced by many of the oh-so-rational arguments for rationing; sometimes I'm at a loss to pinpoint just what in these arguments is flawed. This article is my attempt to think through the issue of rationing.

Rationing is a strategy to contain health-care costs by establishing criteria to decide who gets, and who is denied, specific health-care services. Those who advocate rationing, depending on their particular philosophy, use varying criteria—for example, whether the specified procedure or intervention (say, kidney dialysis) will significantly improve the "quality" of the recipient's life. Some rationing advocates believe that chronological age should be used as a determinant in deciding who gets certain medical treatments.

Rationing health care based on age began to gain currency in 1984, when then-governor of Colorado Dick Lamm was quoted as saying that the elderly "have a duty to die and get out of the way." In 1987, Daniel Callahan, director of the Hastings Center, a think tank on biomedical ethics, set off a national controversy with his book *Setting Limits*, proposing that the United States control health-care costs by rationing services based on age.

Last year, the move to reform national health care gave new impetus to the rationers. In the summer of 1993, the *Atlantic* carried an article by a psychiatrist at the Hastings Center that raised once again the issue of rationing based on age and "quality of life." Although comprehensive health-care reform is dead for the time being, the notion of a national health board to set standards for which medical interventions would be covered under a national plan brought the issue of rationing to the general public.

The rationing debate is fueled by the skyrocketing costs of health care in the U.S. Behind this rise is an array of causes—most of them directly related to the fact that health care in our society is a commodity governed by the rules of capital accumulation, like any other commodity. Health care as we know it in the U.S. is not a right; it's a privilege available to those who can afford to purchase it. Health-care businesses compete with other businesses, HMO with HMO, hospital with hospital, drug company with drug company. Those businesses that can attract customers (patients) who can afford to pay—using billboards, print ads, radio, and TV—will

survive. Health care that is community-based, or that treats the indigent, will "fail to thrive." Increasingly a corporate complex, medicine is a profit-generating activity.

For example, while the average Fortune 500 industry in the U.S. had a profitability of 4.6 percent in 1990, the profitability of the top ten drug companies was around 15.5 percent. Health-care inflation was more than double the average inflation rate in the 1980s, and inflation in the price of prescription drugs was even greater—almost 20 percent more (185 percent) than inflation of overall health-care costs. We also saw the rapid escalation of physician fees and income: between 1973 and 1988 the average physician's net income rose about \$125,000 to \$150,000 in constant 1988 dollars, adjusted for inflation. Ironically, the proliferation of HMOs and other managed-care organizations in the past decade, a model which was touted as reducing costs through increased competition, has led to higher costs. Eli Ginzberg, a health economist writing in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 1986, explained why:

The competitive market is an opponent, not an ally, of cost containment. When capacity increases, advertising and marketing increase, the boundaries of the system are expanded, duplication of costly services is encouraged, and the public is pushed to consume more health-care services than it needs.

(Despite mounting evidence of these effects, and although one of his stated goals is health-care cost containment, President Clinton has obstinately refused to consider a "single payer" health-care system like that of Canada or some Western European countries where the government is the single payer for all health care, controlling prices through its monopoly in the market. With a wink and a nod to the insurance companies and the corporate medical establishment, Clinton calls for "managed competition.")

Those who would ration health care, however, tend to focus on only one of the panoply of causes behind rising health-care costs: their belief that market demand is out of control, due to patients' demands for expensive, high-tech treatments. Such treatments are dispensed, the would-be rationers insist, to those who stand the least chance of benefiting from them. Since health insurance or Medicare pays for all of these treatments, no matter how costly, ineffective, or unrealistically hopeful, the national health-care budget continues to rise.

No one disputes the severity of the fiscal crisis.

Health care consumed \$800 billion in 1993 and costs were growing at 15 percent per year. If unchecked, by the year 2000 each U.S. family will spend \$16,000 a year for health care.

In spite of this massive expenditure (and the lost opportunity for spending some of this same \$800 billion on other social priorities such as education, employment, and infrastructure), the health-care safety net is riddled with holes—if you are poor, a person of color, a woman, gay or lesbian. The AIDS crisis, a spreading epidemic of tuberculosis (a disease once thought to have been eliminated), and the lack of funding for women's health research and care are striking examples. So are the 100,000 people a month who are dropped from insurance rolls because they've

lost their job-based coverage, can't afford to pay the rising premiums, or have an illness redlined by insurers. Emergency rooms are overcrowded with poor people who are turned away from private hospitals; meanwhile, budget cuts are forcing the closure

of public hospitals, clinics, and health facilities in every major city in the country.

Because the health-care rationing argument addresses many of these issues, it seems on target, and therein lies its seductive power. Daniel Callahan, for example, asked, in an address to the American Society on Aging several years ago, "How are we to provide decent access to health care for the more than 30 million people who don't have insurance?... The simple fact is that money spent on health is money taken away from other things. We still spend the same 6 percent on education that we did 30 years ago, but we have almost doubled the share for health since then."

"It is bizarre," Callahan added, "that we have an inefficient health-care system costing us more money while depriving people of decent health care."

Proponents of age-based rationing describe a society bent on life extension through technological intervention—not just the MRIs and CAT scanners, but organ transplants, by-pass surgery, kidney dialysis and designer pharmaceuticals. "Should we expect to live longer than 75 years?" they ask. "Would our society be better if we all lived to 85 or 95?" They point to the fact that just 17 percent of older people account for 60 percent of Medicare payments; and, according to one study, that 6 percent of Medicare beneficiaries who died in one year (1978) accounted for 28 percent of Medicare payments in that year. Other studies confirm that a considerable portion of hospital costs are attributable to patients who die during their hospitalization or shortly after discharge. Armed with this data, rationing advocates charge that older people overconsume medical resources. The elderly, they conclude, should accept death so that resources can be allocated to the young.

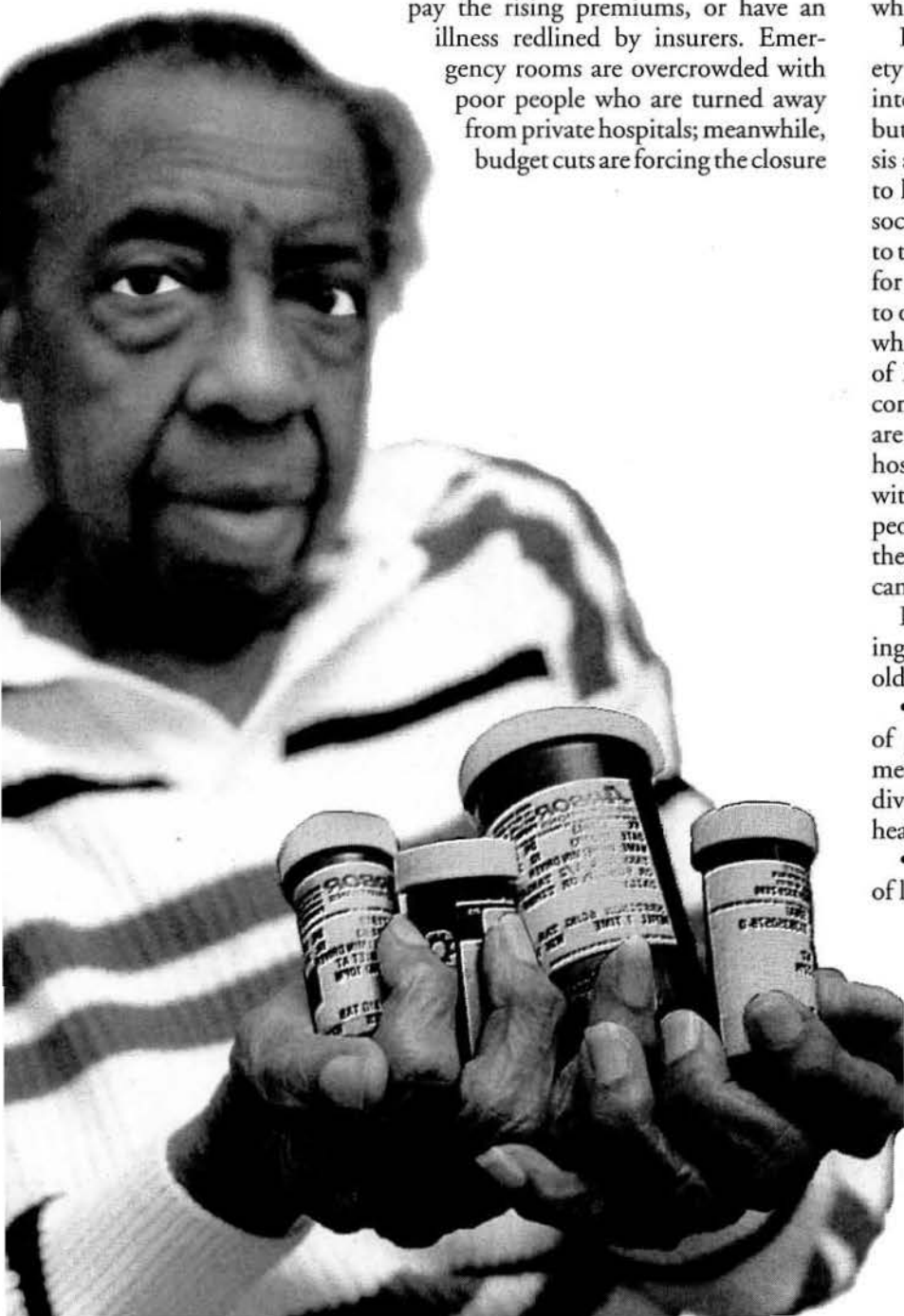
Enticing as this argument is, it relies on misleading generalizations about the relationship between old age and health. In fact:

- Chronological age is a relatively poor predictor of physical functioning or of the effectiveness of medical interventions. The older population is more diverse than the young in every respect, including health status.

- High-cost medical interventions in the last year of life are more likely to be used for persons aged 65 to 80 than for persons over the age of 80.

- High-cost Medicare patients have a 50-50 chance of meaningful survival. Physicians cannot predict at the onset of hospitalization which of these high-cost patients will fall on which side of this line.

Advocates of rationing frequently cite cases of physicians providing life-extending high-technology interventions to keep older people alive, when they would rather be left to die. Family desires, fear of lawsuit, and the training of physicians in a "death-defeating" mentality



are cited as common causes. But rationing advocates ignore the fact that technology manufacturers, hospitals with huge capital investments in high-tech interventions, and physician-owned or -managed labs need their expensive equipment to be utilized in order to see a return on their investment. Physician decisions regarding use of high-tech interventions are driven by profit motives more than they are by patient expectations.

Despite the stories, costly interventions in defiance of patient wishes are isolated incidents. More and more physicians and hospitals are accepting patients' right to die with dignity, particularly as the new and emerging field of medical ethics encourages the use of living wills and durable powers of attorney for health-care decisions.

One reason why the idea of limiting medical treatment based strictly on age is so appealing is that, when it comes to serving the health needs of older people—and especially the very old—the health-care profession is at sea. This is a new population to be served, and guidelines for treatment are not at all clear. As biomedical ethicist Christine Cassel and gerontologist Bernice Neugarten, both of the University of Chicago, point out, this is “especially problematic in a society in which physicians are pressured to be the gatekeepers of society's wealth and to prevent the wasteful use of dollars on people who will not ‘benefit.’” As the term “managed care” comes to be synonymous with “managing cost,” physicians are expected to be the front-line guardians of medical industry profits, by making sure that no one receives “unnecessary” treatment. But doctors, with little geriatric training to counter ageist stereotypes, may be wide open to assumptions that have no basis in fact.

They hear rationing advocates argue that investment in health care for the young is a more prudent investment of societal dollars since it adds more years of life to the young than the old. This is the most dangerous argument of all, since it pits young against old, those without functional limitation against those with physical and mental disabilities. In a society that is increasingly scapegoating the old for the social and economic crisis of the young, and which continues to view disability as a stigma, this is perilous ground to move onto indeed.

Ethicists have referred to the value systems for societal decision-making on who lives or dies as a “slippery slope”—because once you have set out to limit medical care based on arbitrary criteria, it becomes harder and harder to hold your ground. Why age 75? Why not 70, as a cutoff?

And what should the criteria be? What is a rational basis for deciding when to limit life-extending medical care? One approach is to base these decisions on the person's “quality of life.” But this has already proved problematic. When the state of Oregon

initially proposed to allocate its limited Medicaid dollars according to a rationing plan based on quality-of-life considerations (with the admirable goal of covering more poor people under the program), disability activists opposed the plan. The initial version would have excluded coverage for some of the most common causes of disabilities, including traumatic brain injury, myasthenia gravis, and alcoholic cirrhosis of the liver. As Bob Griss, a senior health-policy researcher at the United Cerebral Palsy Associations, noted, “In an unmistakable example of discrimination on the basis of medical diagnosis, Oregon proposes to fund a liver transplant for a person with non-alcoholic liver failure, but will not fund the same service for a person with alcoholic cirrhosis of the liver, despite similar success rates.” Do those who are “aging successfully” deserve more medical care than those whose quality of life—measured in terms of level of physiologic functioning—is low? Oregon's proposed plan seemed to say yes.

Inadvertently, Oregon was choosing an approach to health-care cost containment that smacked of eugenics. Although a far cry from Nazi Germany, it brought to mind the fact that genocide began with physician-supported “mercy killing” of those who were retarded, mentally ill, aged, and infirm.

There are many who blame societal problems on inequities between young and old, citing accurate and appalling statistics about the number of children in poverty and female-headed households. Yet, at a time when entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare are under attack from twentysomething right-wing populist groups like Lead or Leave, when the media are manipulating survey data to show that “Generation X” blames the old for their diminished expectations, do we need yet another argument for intergenerational conflict?

The plight of children is dire and must be addressed before an entire generation is lost—but the problem isn't that the old are robbing cradles. In health care, as in education, employment, housing, and the rest, continuing and growing societal inequities are rooted in institutions that cater to wealth and discriminate by race, gender, and sexual orientation. The solution to health-care problems is not to deny treatment to someone when she or he reaches a certain age. We desperately need a system that is based on caring for all people and on understanding the complex physical and psychosocial realities of the aging individual. We need a health-care system designed to enrich the quality of each of our lives, not to extend it in order to enrich the medical industry or to terminate it based on a set of statistics. □

Jimmy Emerman is the director of development and special projects for the American Society on Aging, and a former editor of Breakthrough.

ACROSS THE





BORDERLINE

From California's border with Mexico to the Caribbean to Europe and Africa, the question of immigrants and refugees is in the headlines. Tens of millions of people have left their countries of origin, driven by war, famine, political persecution, and the economic policies of imperialism, now called the "New World Order." As international economic agreements like NAFTA and now the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) accelerate the movement of capital and goods around the world, people are also forced to follow capital into the United States and Europe. Ordinary people in the U.S., too, are facing unemployment, dislocation, wage cuts, and the decline of government services, directly caused by this realignment of international economic forces. In this setting, demagogic politicians are tapping historic racism and xenophobia and trying to lay the blame on immigrants. In California these attacks include a ballot initiative to deny public education and health and social services to people of any age who cannot document their immigration status.

In the four articles published here, Breakthrough presents analyses of the current attacks on immigrants, including the particular impact on women; the historical basis for anti-immigrant racism; and documentation of the right-wing ties of the Federation for American Immigration Reform, one of the architects of the current campaigns.

We are also printing the Immigrant Rights Action Pledge. The Pledge promises that teachers and other service providers will refuse to comply with the provisions of the California ballot initiative, Proposition 187, that requires them to act as agents of La Migra, checking people's documents and turning in suspected undocumented immigrants.

The Popular Politics of Immigrant Bashing

interview with Lina Avidan

Lina Avidan is the director of public policy for the Coalition for Immigration and Refugee Rights and Services (CIRRS), an alliance of over 90 non-profit organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area. Member groups range from small grassroots committees to large civil rights and legal and social service organizations. The largest network of its kind in the United States, CIRRS advocates for immigrants and refugees with federal, state, and local governments; provides information, outreach, community education, and leadership training; and coordinates services for member groups. Contact CIRRS at 995 Market Street, Suite 1108, San Francisco, CA 94103, phone (415) 243-8215, FAX (415) 243-8628. We interviewed Lina on July 18, 1994.

BREAKTHROUGH: LET'S START WITH THE global picture: there are tens of millions of people who are outside their countries of origin. So the so-called immigration problems happening in the U.S. are an international phenomenon. What accounts for it?

Lina Avidan: It has a lot to do with the globalization of the international workforce. For the last couple of centuries there's been this huge sacking of resources from the developing world, and people are naturally going to follow the resources that are taken out of their countries. Many of the developed countries of the world that are complaining about the huge population of undocumented immigrants and even lawful immigrants—Australia, Japan, Britain, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Canada, the U.S.—are countries that for many years welcomed immigrants with open arms and have many generations of immigrants. Now they are finding that they cannot support the workforce any longer. There has been a lot of corporate divestment in the developed world and more investment in the developing world. Transnational corporations no longer have any kind of national allegiance. Corporations can open and close shop and seek the best climate for investment, labor conditions, and things like that that suit them.

BT: What about immigrants and the U.S. economy?

LA: In the United States—even in California—we still don't have double digit unemployment, but when you look at other parts of the world, Western Europe for example, a lot of places do. Politicians and others are looking for scapegoats the same as they do here, and they blame immigrants. The fact is, there are not enough jobs for everybody, and immigrants oftentimes, because they are so easily

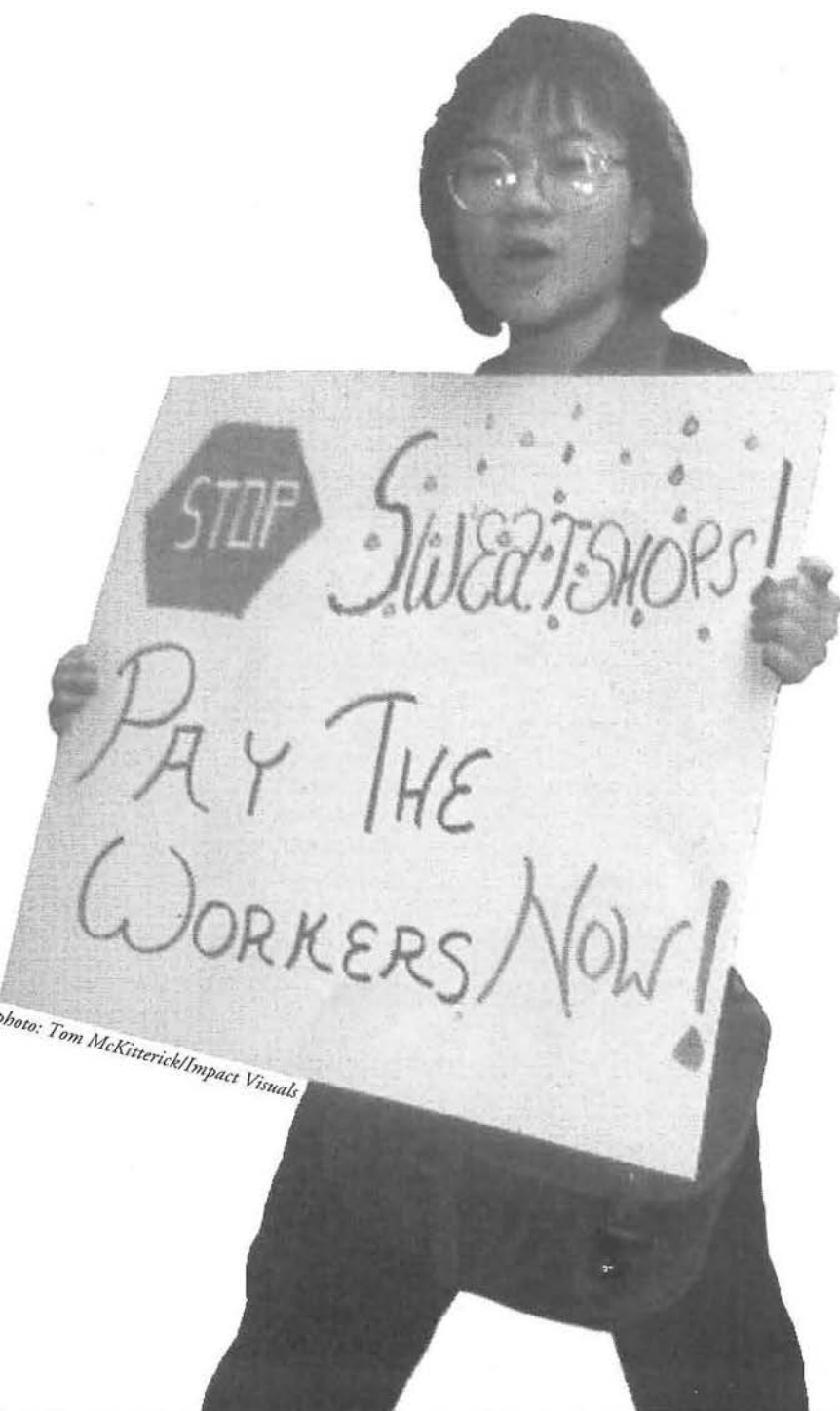


photo: Tom McKitterick/Impact Visuals

exploitable, end up being favored by employers, and they get hired. At the same time, what people don't recognize is that immigrants, because they are such a flexible workforce, often sustain growth and development in those countries because they keep businesses going that otherwise would have moved somewhere else where they could find cheaper labor. Many mainstream economists claim that California would be in a lot worse shape than it is now if it weren't for the highly flexible undocumented workforce.

The vast majority of studies that have been conducted on the economic impact of immigrants point to the same conclusions: overwhelmingly, immigrants are good, not bad, for the U.S. economy. So the question to me is, if you publish results like that over and over, if President Bush's Council of Economic Advisors, Milton Friedman, the Hoover Institution, the Urban Institute, the *Wall St. Journal* and *Newsweek*, if they are all saying the same thing, and yet people still don't believe it, and they'd still rather listen to Dianne Feinstein and Pete Wilson—then what's the rub? To me the rub is race.

BT: Some people say that immigrants are taking the jobs of other poor workers, particularly Black workers.

LA: In the wake of the L.A. uprising after the Rodney King verdict, anti-immigration groups blamed the presence of large numbers of Latino immigrants for the lack of economic opportunities in the Black community. Since when did right-wing anti-immigration activists care about economic opportunities for the Black community?

This is just one more time when the powers that be pitted one group of disenfranchised poor people against another. Organizing is really the answer, especially labor organizing. One of the things that I know the most about is the impact that employer sanctions have had on the labor force in California and the U.S. It is illogical to think that by taking all of the rights away from one group of workers that you are going to make them less attractive to hire; it is just the opposite.

BT: What are employer sanctions?

LA: Employer sanctions were

part of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, IRCA. Employer sanctions for the first time made it illegal to hire workers without INS docu-



photos this page: Donna Binder/Impact Visuals

mentation. The premise was that undocumented immigrants were taking jobs away from U.S. workers, so if you made it illegal to hire them that would increase the employment rate of native workers and improve their working conditions and wages.

Actually the opposite has happened. All of a sudden undocumented workers were no longer protected by state and federal labor protections. Before IRCA, if an employer retaliated against any workers—regardless of their immigration status—for whistle-blowing, say, the company could be required to reinstate them and pay them back pay. But now U.S. employers have this defense: the Labor Commission can say, "You retaliated against this worker unfairly, and you have to hire her back and pay her back pay," and the employer can say, "Gee, your honor, I really wish I could, but she is not authorized to work in the U.S., so I can't reinstate her."

So what happens over and over again is that employers use sanctions as a union-breaking tool. They hold it over the heads of the entire workforce that is organizing that they will call in the INS. For unscrupulous employers, undocumented immigrants are now much more attractive than they ever were before because they do not have the same labor law protections.



So sanctions have not resulted in a decrease in illegal immigration at all. They have not decreased the employment of undocumented workers at all.

BT: *But who is complaining? It is not the large corporations that are complaining.*

LA: No, it's not the corporations; it is elected officials. Sanctions have been a failed policy, but for political reasons they will continue to keep them, I'm sure. Now they are saying that the reason sanctions are a failure is because it is so easy to come by fraudulent documents. So the solution being proposed is to institute a national identifier.

I was actually fortunate enough to be at hearings in the spring that were hosted by the Commission on

have got to! I felt like I was in *The Twilight Zone* listening to this testimony. The rationale is that there is just so much pressure—political pressure—to *do something*. We applaud the demise of the pass system in South Africa; now there are official proposals for establishing one here!

BT: *When you say political pressure, do you mean from politicians?*

LA: I think that politicians have created this whole craze. Especially in California, if you look at just, in the last two years, what Governor Pete Wilson and Senator Dianne Feinstein, among others, have accomplished. I think that a lot of this hatred and these misconceptions about the impact of immigrants can

be blamed on those two people. And then, of course groups like the Federation for American Immigration Reform (see UnFAIR, page 21) and all of these right-wing politicians who are like-minded are going to piggy-back on that stuff. Just over a year ago Wilson kicked off his reelection campaign with a full-page ad in the *New York Times*. It called for denying education to undocumented children and denying citizenship as a birthright.

As the California economy has worsened, xenophobia has increased. You can look historically at the U.S. and see that has always happened. When times get tough, we look for groups to scapegoat. In earlier times we would scapegoat Blacks who were moving from the South to the North. Then for a while Irish, Italian,

and Polish immigrants were added to the list. Now it's Latin American and Asian immigrants.

BT: *Tell us about Proposition 187, the so-called Save Our State ballot initiative coming up in California.*

LA: What the initiative would do is not only deprive a K-12 education to undocumented children, it would require teachers and health-care providers and all state and local government employees to screen every individual that comes to them for assistance, and if they suspect that individual is an undocumented immigrant they have to report that person to the INS and then to a variety of state officials or local agencies, such as the attorney general or the Department of Education. So it would be illegal for any state or local hospital or clinic to provide health



photo: Jeffry Scott/Impact Visuals

Immigration Reform, which was established as part of the Immigration Act of 1990. They are supposed to look into a number of different immigration issues and report back to the administration and to Congress. They held hearings on the feasibility of having a national identifier and they had people from the Social Security Administration and the INS and from the Secret Service, which is responsible for fraudulent documents. And all these agencies came up with the same conclusion: that it is impossible to create a tamper-proof identifier. No matter how sophisticated you are with lasers and holograms and all that stuff, the bootleggers are always going to be one step behind you. There is always going to be a reasonable facsimile. You can't do it—but the bottom line is that *politically* you

care, except in life-threatening emergencies, to an undocumented immigrant, regardless of their ability or willingness to pay. It would require U.S. citizen children with undocumented parents to report their parents to the authorities or be expelled from the school. It would essentially turn California into a Gestapo atmosphere. It is very frightening. The expressed aim of the authors and the sponsors of this initiative is to challenge a 1982 Supreme Court decision that was brought in the state of Texas that established the right of a K-12 education to undocumented children based on an argument of equal protection, and also on the fact that children do not have a choice about where they live and should not be made to suffer for the actions of their parents.

BT: Do you see this as setting an example for other states?

LA: There is to my knowledge no other similar initiative anywhere else in the country, but when it comes to immigration, anything that happens legislatively in California is looked at very closely around the country. And as a matter of fact immigrant-rights groups and civil-rights groups all around the country are looking to what is going on here and seeing where they can get involved. The people that have pulled together to fight this initiative run the gamut from the Democratic National Committee and the state democratic party to major labor unions, the California Nurses Association, Medical Association, and Teachers Association, the ecumenical community, civil-rights organizations, children's-rights advocates, you name it.

I think the women's movement nationwide is really beginning to recognize the need to support immigrant and refugee women. The immigrant-rights movement has been instrumental in convincing the women's movement that they needed to start pressuring for gender-based persecution as grounds for political asylum, things like that. Gay and lesbian groups and AIDS activists are also taking up the banner of immigrants' rights because the U.S. has the biggest forced HIV testing in the world; they forcibly test all foreigners that enter the country and can deny them entry if they are HIV-positive, and they try to deport HIV-positive immigrants that are

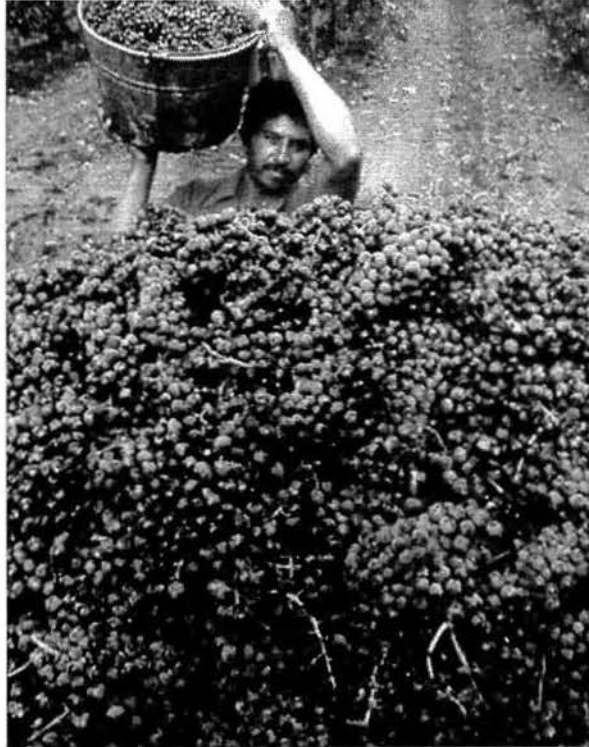


photo: Euan Johnson/Impact Visuals

already here. The immigrant-rights movement has also been instrumental in establishing homophobia as a basis for political asylum.

BT: What is the prospect of Proposition 187 passing and becoming law?

LA: Well, according to some polls, it would pass overwhelmingly today; almost 70 percent of those polled said that they would vote for it. But I don't think that those voters understand yet what the initiative calls for. There are real questions about whether it would

save money. Besides costing millions of dollars in creating new bureaucracies, the initiative would jeopardize \$15 billion in federal grants for education and health care because of strict confidentiality protections required by federal grants. Not only would there be huge expenses to the state of California, more than the money that would be saved, but also in terms of the social costs, many people, regardless of how they might feel about undocumented immigration, would not want to live in a Big Brother atmosphere, where people are suspect based on their names, appearance, or accent, and where people are expected to turn their neighbors in.

I understand why it is that many people do not vote, but it is really important to vote against this initiative. The odds are against us, and it would have a devastating impact if this initiative passes, not just in California but nationally. It is really important for people of color to understand that the attacks on immigrants and refugees are a direct attack on every person of color. Especially Latinos and Asians are going to be the first ones to be singled out. They are going to be the ones to go to the emergency room and be asked to prove that they are Americans.

BT: As well as this initiative in California, are there attacks on immigrants on the federal level?

LA: Many! For example, financing welfare reform by denying benefits to lawful immigrants—whose

see AVIDAN, p42



photo: Lonny Shavelson/Impact Visuals

Smallville Strikes Back

by Bill Tamayo

William R. (Bill) Tamayo is the managing attorney of the Asian Law Caucus, a public-interest legal organization based in San Francisco, and the former chairperson of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (310 Eighth Street, Suite 307, Oakland, CA 94607), and is a founder and board member of the Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and Services. In these excerpts from a 1989 speech to the National Lawyer's Guild convention in Los Angeles, Tamayo spells out the ideological basis for historical and continuing attacks on immigrants.

IT'S SOMEWHAT AMUSING TO SEE THAT MANY OF those who advocate for curbs on immigration, or who blame immigrants for the country's problems, at one time in their youth thought the great American hero was Superman, an "illegal alien" who

stood for "truth, justice, and the American way" even though he had no papers.

In fact, he entered without inspection, used the false identity of Clark Kent, claimed to be born in Smallville, U.S.A., attended public schools, worked as a reporter without authorization from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and to top it off had *carte blanche* to enforce the laws by violating individuals' rights to privacy with his x-ray vision and superhearing. Luckily, Ma and Pa Kent were never arrested for transporting and harboring him.

Now of course if Superman were dark brown instead of white, he would never have been excused from showing immigration papers. And, since he wore an aerobics outfit of blue tights, red boots, and red shorts instead of baggy pants and a tattered flannel shirt, probable cause to arrest was never an issue. And, having disguised his immigration status so well, he never bothered to marry Lois Lane.

But while we may laugh, the sentiment against the undocumented and the immigrant sector as a whole is a powerful force in national politics.

For those of us who espouse civil rights, the defense of the undocumented oftentimes pits us against a public and government that are more than willing to deny millions their basic democratic and civil rights. Let's be frank. When you advocate on behalf of the undocumented or immigrants in general, you advocate on behalf of a sector of U.S. society that oftentimes is non-white, non-citizen, non-English speaking, that can't vote, that has little money, that has the worst job conditions, that's non-unionized, that lives in fear of deportation, that's afraid to assert what rights it has, that faces persecution and dire poverty if deported, and to top it off is a sector of society that's blamed for every social problem, for pollution, unemployment, crime, overpopulation, traffic congestion, disease, drugs, and terrorism. You name it, they caused it.

But organizing against the current manifestations of anti-immigrant attitudes requires, at the minimum, a historical understanding of those attitudes' deep-seeded roots in U.S. customs and traditions.

With the institutionalization of slavery, and in turn the institutionalization of racism and all the ideological baggage that comes with it, discrimination against all non-white groups became part of the social fabric of U.S. society. Racism was practiced, judicially approved, legislated, and blessed because, for centuries, it insured for the plantations and for the economy as a whole the existence of that large pool of labor with no rights—a cheap labor pool that



insured the production of tremendous profits.

On the other side of the coin, for whites, the system of slavery and racial oppression laid the basis for an outlook and perspective that endorsed and approved of racism. Of course, being white meant that you were free, that you could own land, that you could own slaves, that you could get an education. But, above all, it meant that you weren't a slave, for the maxim of the time was "all slaves are black and no whites are slaves." Being white, then, and not black, brought certain material benefits, privileges, and incentives.

The material advantages in being white and not black in the history of the United States are so significant that whites have a sorry tradition of fighting vehemently for those racial privileges and advantages. Certainly when racism affects all phases of life—employment, education, where your kids can go to school or if they can go to school, where you can live, shop, worship, eat, and drink water, who you can marry, and whether you will be socially accepted—the maintenance of racism became paramount for many white Americans.

Now, it must be unequivocally understood that it was upon this set of social relations that the United States was founded in 1776. And in the forging of patriotism and national consciousness, the concept of racial discrimination in all its facets was inherently and inevitably embodied in that patriotism. Certainly, the Founding Fathers, despite all their praise of freedom, were not about to abandon their class interests and break the U.S. economy by freeing all the slaves in 1776.

With the westward move of capital, developing the mines and railroads called for the import of Chinese labor in the 1840s to California. Thousands of Chinese forced by poverty out of their homeland ventured to California. They entered this state during slavery and legalized racism, and during a period of state-sanctioned and publicly accepted violence against Blacks, Native Americans, and Mexicans.

Barred from owning land or becoming U.S. citizens, the early Chinese became the steady labor force for the railroads and mines. Social practice and laws insured their being "locked in" to this stratum of the workforce. By the mid-1870s, during a severe depression on the West Coast, Chinese laborers were 50 percent of the labor force in California. With

many white miners and workers displaced by the eventual failure of the industry, Chinese easily became the ideal scapegoats and the victims of racial violence. For not only were the Chinese non-whites, but they were "foreigners," "aliens," "yellow heathens," "little men with pigtailed running around in pajamas," taking away the jobs of whites.

This anti-Chinese movement began to encompass all sectors of American life from San Francisco to Washington, DC. Lynch mobs chasing Chinese,



white union leaders led by Samuel Gompers blaming Chinese for the 1870s' depression, and congressional moves to restrict immigration, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, became the order of the day.

It's very simple then to see the roots of the all-American tradition of blaming minorities and immigrants for this country's economic problems, but still making sure that they are available to work for the lowest wages in the worst conditions. Certainly, with the structures of racism firmly embedded in society, and with the history of anti-immigrant sentiment against Catholics and non-Anglos in the East Coast, nothing less than the most virulent racist and anti-foreign practices that Americans could offer would be unleashed against the Chinese.

The fact that so many white workers turned against their fellow workers of color is an important phenomenon to understand. For underlying their anti-Chinese hysteria was a dangerous notion or belief that they as white, native-born men had some claim to a job, a certain *birthright*, if you will, to the jobs before minorities, immigrants, and women could compete for them. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, this belief or claim to a birthright would become part of the ideological framework of nearly every white, native-born male for decades, and in turn would be a founding principle of many major unions throughout U.S. history.

That history—with its politics and ideological outlook subsequently updated by an anti-communist mandate written into the law in 1952—has set the framework for the most recent attacks on immigrants both documented and undocumented. □

Women Immigrants: Down by Law

by Equal Rights Advocates

The following report is taken from the 1991-1992 annual report of Equal Rights Advocates (ERA), one of the country's oldest women's law centers. You can contact ERA at 1663 Mission Street, Suite 550, San Francisco, CA 94103, phone (415) 621-0672.

THE IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S TASK FORCE WAS founded in 1988 by Equal Rights Advocates (ERA), the Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and Services (CIRRS), and other advocacy groups.

It is one of the first groups in the country dedicated to the concerns of immigrant women—a segment of the women's community virtually invisible within the traditional women's movement and probably one of the poorest and most susceptible to abuse and exploitation.

The task force was conceived out of the realization that the 1986 Immigrant Reform and Control Act (IRCA)—the most comprehensive immigration law ever passed in the United States—simply ignored the “feminization” of immigration, as well as the day-to-day realities of women's lives. IRCA failed to recognize, for example, that 42.3 percent of undocumented migrants to the United States between 1970 and 1979 were women. A 1979 Los Angeles survey found that women constituted 52.7 percent of undocumented immigrants in that area.

The assumption was that IRCA's provisions and regulations were sex-neutral. But they weren't—they hurt women.

In effect, IRCA's strict documentation provisions and regulations discouraged women eligible for amnesty from applying, prevented eligible women from obtaining amnesty and, as a consequence, made legalization virtually impossible for tens of thousands of women. Women who should have been the beneficiaries of Congress's one-time-only am-



Photo: Christopher Ludwig/Impact Visuals

nesty program were unfairly condemned to live an illegal existence in the United States.

With the implementation of IRCA, conditions for immigrant women have grown increasingly worse. Bearing the dual burdens of raising and supporting a family, immigrant women ineligible for legalization have been forced further underground where they find even fewer legal, economic, and social resources. Jobs are scarce for these women because employers cannot legally hire undocumented immigrant women. And undocumented immigrant women who are employed increasingly experience poor working conditions, sexual harassment, and other forms of abuse because employers know they are not free to seek new jobs and that they are often unfamiliar with their rights under civil-rights law or are afraid to stand up for their rights. To make matters worse, IRCA denies or severely limits immigrants' access to medical coverage, unemployment benefits, legal-aid services, and other social-service programs.

Perhaps the most damaging aspect of IRCA, however, is found in the mechanism adopted by Congress to enforce compliance—employer sanc-

tions. IRCA forced employers to require every new employee to produce evidence of eligibility for work in the U.S. Women ineligible for legalization—only because they didn't have bank accounts, driver's licenses, rent receipts, and other "paper" to prove their continuous residence in the United States—and all other undocumented women cannot provide that evidence.

Further, by "grandfathering in" any immigrant who was employed before November 1986—such workers are not required to produce proof of work authorization for their present employers, but they do have to furnish proof if they try to find a new job—employer sanctions create a trapped, exploitable workforce. "Grandfathered" immigrant workers, who often work in the least regulated industries to begin with, are forced to choose between staying at an exploitative, legal job and trying to find a less abusive, illegal one.

The calls ERA has received attest to the severity of discrimination they face and the difficulty they have in reaching out for help. Women in an agricultural

see DOWN BY LAW, p22

UnFAIR

by Steven Rendall

The Federation for American Immigration Reform, which calls itself FAIR, is a major advocate of anti-immigration measures. Alan Nelson (INS commissioner under Bush) was a legislative advocate for the Federation at the time he co-authored California's anti-immigrant initiative, Proposition 187. Steven Rendall of another FAIR—Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting, a national media watch group (130 W. 25th Street, New York, NY 10001)—looked into the political and financial support for anti-immigrant FAIR's extensive activities. Here's an excerpt from Rendall's report.

WHILE PRESENTING ITSELF AS AN ORGANIZATION that simply advocates for immigration reform in the public interest, the Federation receives significant funding—rarely noted in press accounts—from a foundation that is explicitly motivated by a racist, eugenicist ideology.

For years, the Federation has been supported by the Pioneer Fund, a trust founded in 1937 by Wycliffe P. Draper, a textile millionaire who promoted sending blacks back to Africa, and crusading eugenics

and sterilization advocates Harry Laughlin and Frederick Osborne. In 1936 Laughlin received an honorary degree from Heidelberg University for his contributions to Nazi eugenics and "racial hygiene." Osborne once described the Nazi sterilization law as a "most exciting experiment" (*Discovery Journal* 7/9/94, *Irish Times* 5/23/94). The Pioneer Fund has been described in the London *Sunday Telegraph* (3/12/89) as a "neo-Nazi organization closely integrated with the far Right in American politics."

Pioneer is one of the Federation's key financial backers. According to Internal Revenue Service records, the group has received more than \$1,000,000 from Pioneer since 1982. In 1992, the most recent year for which figures are available, Pioneer gave the Federation \$150,000.

The Pioneer Fund's charter specifies that its trustees should give scholarships only to students "who are citizens of the United States...who are deemed to be descended predominately from white persons who settled in the original 13 states prior to the adoption of the Constitution." In 1985, due to public

see UNFAIR, p22

UNFAIR, from p21

criticism, the word "white" was omitted from the charter (*Washington Times* 7/3/91).

John Tanton founded the Federation in 1979 and was chairman when the group began receiving Pioneer Fund money in 1982. In 1983 Tanton founded U.S. English, an English-only advocacy group. In 1988 conservative Linda Chavez resigned as president of U.S. English following the publication of an internal memo written by Tanton. The memo, which resulted from a closed meeting that included Federation for American Immigration Reform personnel, discusses the "dangers" of a Hispanic "population explosion." In the memo Tanton declares, "Whites will see their power and control over their lives declining.... Perhaps this is the first instance in which those with their pants up are going to be caught by those with their pants down" (*Newsday* 10/16/91).

Tanton still speaks for the Federation and remains on its board of directors.

By accepting money from the Pioneer Fund, the Federation for American Immigration Reform puts itself in the company of a variety of racist projects. The Fund's other beneficiaries in recent years have included:

- Roger Pearson, director of the Institute for the Study of Man. A *Wall Street Journal* article in 1984 dubbed Pearson a "racial purist" who advocated artificial insemination to preserve "pure, healthy stock" and warned of "terrible consequences" should such a program of genetic selection "fall into the hands of cosmopolites or one-worlders, or any who wish to see our race and our heritage destroyed." Pearson's Institute publishes *Mankind Quarterly*, described by the London *Independent* as a "mouthpiece" for neo-Nazi philosophies, with links to former Nazi geneticists. The Pioneer Fund granted Pearson \$119,500 in 1992.
- A study at the University of Western Ontario comparing cranium size, gonad size, and IQ distribution among blacks, whites, and Asians (the *Sunday Telegraph* 3/12/89). Pioneer granted \$96,755 in 1992.
- Dr. Michael Levin, professor of philosophy at City College of New York who claims that blacks as a group have low IQs, was granted \$64,500 in 1992.
- The late Professor William B. Shockley, who recommended a "voluntary sterilization bonus plan," or paying genetically "inferior" populations to be sterilized (the *Sunday Telegraph* 3/12/89).

In addition to financial backing by the Pioneer Fund, the Federation for American Immigration Reform has regularly received money from the Laurel Foundation, a fund controlled by Cordelia Scaife May, a right-wing maverick of the Mellon fortune

who seems obsessed with Third World birth rate. Scaife May's zealotry on the topic is underlined by her support for birth-control programs, including abortion, in other countries. Any doubt about the racial motivations behind Scaife May and the Laurel Foundation should be removed by Laurel's role in the distribution of *The Camp of the Spirits*, a book about the downfall of white European civilization due to immigration and the influx of non-whites. Conservative Linda Chavez has called the book "racist, xenophobic, and paranoid."

DOWN BY LAW, from p21

packing company in rural California, for example, were ordered to have sex with their supervisor or lose their jobs. When one of the women complained, her children were threatened with physical harm. In another heartbreaking case, a young woman orphaned and with no family in the U.S. was hired as a domestic and paid \$100 a month for 10 to 12 hours of work a day! Although she feared that her employer would rape her, she was also terrified that he would turn her over to the authorities. It took great courage, but the woman finally left. She preferred to live with the fear of deportation than to work in such an abusive and exploitative environment.

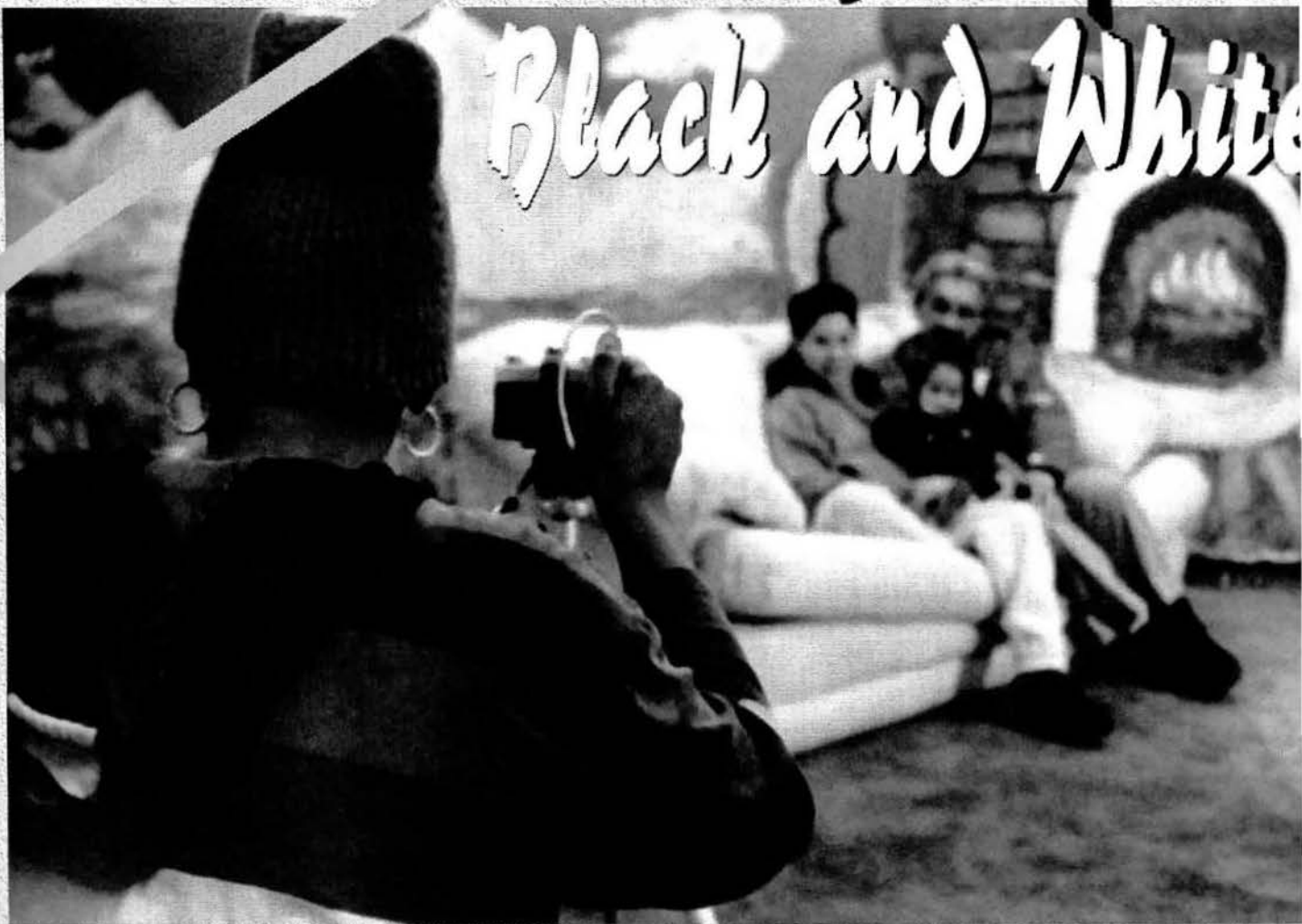
Another problem faced by immigrant women is increased vulnerability to domestic violence, since women without work authorization have a hard time leaving physically abusive spouses. Because undocumented immigrant women cannot receive public benefits, they are left with few options. In a survey of over 400 undocumented women in the San Francisco Bay Area, respondents identified domestic violence as one of their most significant problems. Fear of discovery and deportation keeps women from reporting the abuse or seeking help.

In addition, immigrant women have felt coerced to remain in abusive relationships in order to gain permanent residence status. Until recently an immigrant woman married to a legal U.S. resident citizen needed her husband's cooperation in order to petition for legal residency or citizenship. Due, in part, to the work of ERA and the Bay Area Immigrant Women's Task Force, federal legislation was passed that allows a woman to seek a waiver if she can show that she or her children are being battered.

In the last 15 years, the United States, and California in particular, has become the new home for thousands of immigrants from around the world. Among these are a large number of women who are disenfranchised as a result of their gender, immigration status, and ethnicity. Women's advocates—along with other activists—must work together to ensure that the voices of immigrant women are heard in the nation's public-policy debates.

photo: Mike Fitelson

Close-up in Black and White



THESE FAMILY PORTRAITS WERE TAKEN IN 1993 and 1994 by members of a photography class that I teach at Homeplace Family Center, a service and community center for homeless and at-risk families in largely African-American West Oakland, California. Everybody in the class and in these photos is or has been homeless.

Because many Homeplace participants have either never had pictures of their families, or have lost them, once a week the class takes family portraits. In this controlled situation, with arranged lighting and a tripod, new photographers are able to take good photos their first day in class, then come into the darkroom the following week to make prints themselves. Each portrait is a product of family dynamics and cooperation between photographer and models rather than of technique, which people pick up as they go along.

It's often extremely difficult for people to attend classes regularly, or even get all their children together for a portrait. Few people have cars or money for buses, so they have to walk blocks, sometimes miles, to get children from different schools. Some children live with other family members. Child Protective Services

(CPS) has often taken children away to foster homes, and it can take months to arrange to get everybody to Homeplace at the same time. If we are not able to get the kids together, we will take a portrait of just the parent(s).

The photos here are accompanied by statements by the mothers. When displayed outside the center, this combination of pictures and words confronts and contradicts the stereotypes about single mothers, homelessness, and the Black and Latino communities. It is an accessible way for people to understand some of the dynamics of the social and economic oppression that is producing the misery on our streets. Displayed inside the center, these stories transform "individual secrets" of poverty, sexual abuse, or drug addiction into "social problems" that we can all struggle with.

Scott Braley

Oakland: Close-up in Black and White *photographs are available for exhibition. The class relies on individual donations for equipment. If you have usable camera or darkroom equipment you can give us, contact Scott Braley at Box 20207, Oakland, CA 94620, phone (510) 655-7638.*

Debra Cas
taking the photo
Margar
Garcia-Puled



Margaret Garcia-Puledo: I'm 34 years old, a New Yoricaino. I came to Homeplace as a volunteer, and I've been a staff person here for two years. My kids are Jessica Marie Puledo, age 1, and Miguel Angel Pagan, 15. Miguel is in a group home in San Martin because he got into a gang in East Oakland and got into trouble. We go see him every week. I never knew my own mom; she left me and my little sister when I was 4. Dad put us in an orphanage in New York, where we stayed for two years; then we went into a foster home.

You know, after you interviewed Virginia, I just cried and cried, because all the hurt came back. I could feel her pain, her body pain, the pain of her kids. Miguel's dad used to beat me. One day I just picked up Miguel and left, but then I got into another abusive relationship, got into drugs, was

Geraldine Hackett: I'm 22 years old, born here in Oakland. My dad left when I was 6 or 7, and my Mom is a Jehovah's Witness, so you know I didn't do much of anything when I was young. I don't talk much to either one of them.

I ran away with my boyfriend David when I was 15 and he was 34. When they brought me back I made my Mom let me marry him, but he turned out to be a dog—he was fooling around with my cousin! I had the marriage annulled, but by then I had Dezeray, now 4, and Lorianna, now 2. I still graduated from Castlemont High School.

After the marriage was annulled, I went to A Women's Refuge, then the Salvation Army, but there was an employee there who was sexually harassing me, so Darlene Fraser here at Homeplace got me a place of my own really fast. I was only homeless for about a month and a half. About this time I met Jack Glenn, and we had Patrisha, who is now one year old.

You know, I've never done any kind of drugs, don't smoke or drink coffee. I've gotten drunk twice in my life—the first time I got Dezeray, and the second time I got Patrisha. The only addiction I have is stress.

One time I was stressed out, I got suspended from Homeplace for two months. I had been cooking here since nine in the morning, I was really tired, and this woman came up and says, "Give me some pork and beans, bitch." So I did. My hands were all burned, my caseworker Darlene got burned on her back, and the lady called the cops. To get back in I had to take a mental health class, so I chose Effective Black Parenting. It was really useful, but I had to pay for it because I wasn't an addict or already had my kids taken away.

living on the street with Miguel. I came out here with a friend in 1980 to get away from it all. For six months I went to the unemployment office every day with my son. I had to get a job 'cause I was starting to drink again. Finally I got an interview for a counter job at a bakery—\$3.25 an hour. I literally got down on my knees and begged for the job. She hired me, then when I got an apartment she lent me the money to move in—\$273. I lived there six years.

I met my husband Jesse at that bakery. We've been together ten years. He teaches baking at Laney College and Santa Rita jail. After I finish taking classes we are going to move to Reno where he comes from. We're going to open up a home for abused and unwanted kids. You know, Homeplace is my second home—where I can heal and help others, especially the children. I want people who come in here off the street to know that I understand their pain and frustration. I think that they can look at me and see that there is hope, 'cause I've been there. I tell people that I've got two strong shoulders if they need them, and they are welcome to cry on them.

Margaret Garcia-Puledo moved to Reno with her husband Jesse and both her children. She is a childcare worker while she prepares to open up a center for abused children.

What I live on is \$742 from AFDC, \$100 from the first father, \$50 from Patrisha's father, and \$214 in stamps. My rent is \$603. I get the kids' clothes at K-Mart, and don't buy anything else except diapers and bus passes.

I'm now going to Bryman's school to be a medical assistant. In six more months I hope to have a job. I want to put all three of my daughters through college, so they can be very rich and take care of me in my old age.

I've never been abused by a man. I say: "You hit me, I kill you, I go to jail—simple as that." The police tell you to call them the first time he hits you, so there is a record of it. Then the second time, just let him have it.

Geraldine Hackett is still living with Jack Glenn, went to nursing school for several months, but dropped out to work. She just received subsidized housing.

Geraldine Hackett



Geraldine Hackett

Carolyn Flagler



photo: Raquel Quinones

Carolyn Flagler: I'm 33 years old, born in Sioux City, Iowa. I'm the third youngest of one sister, seven brothers, and five play brothers. I have five kids, Famous Eugene Brooks, 19, Ebony Tamara Lawson, 13, Billie Jean Lawson, 12, and my two youngest, Mr. Alvin Lee Flagler, 5, and Sir Paul Allen Flagler, 3.

I don't remember that much about my childhood. I had my first child when I was 16, when I left home and dropped out of school. I gave my first boy to the father because I was drinking and working the streets. I got married when I was 21 to a man who was real abusive, mentally and physically. My two daughters were taken from me and given to my mother until she passed in 1986. Now they are with my great aunt.

My second husband was abusive too. All we had in common was crack. I had two boys with him and left him April 4, 1990. I watched my father beat my mother till the day he died and didn't want my boys to see that. When CPS took the kids I decided it was time to get help. I had been drinking from when I was 14. Started with crack when I was 27. When I was 30 I went into West Oakland Health Center Recovery Program. Now I'm three years clean and sober. I came into Homeplace as a client, and now I'm an employee. I've got custody of my two boys, a job, a car, and a place of my own.

My brother David lives with us. He is 21, he helps with the boys, does the cooking, keeps the house, keeps my spirits up. He gives me a hug and tells me he loves me every day. He gets the boys at MLK Child Development Center at 5:30 and we have a regular evening—we fuss and fight, they yell and scream, they have baths, and go to bed.

My GAIN worker is going to to get me into Laney College for computer repair because I like to fix things with my hands. I also want to stay working here at Homeplace. If you've really experienced the street, you understand the people that come in here. You also know when people are full of shit.

Carolyn was staffing the front desk at Homeplace at the time of this interview. She is now a case manager and part of the full time staff. David is also working part-time at the center, helping with food preparation.



photo: Margaret Garcia-Puledo

photo: Scott Brady

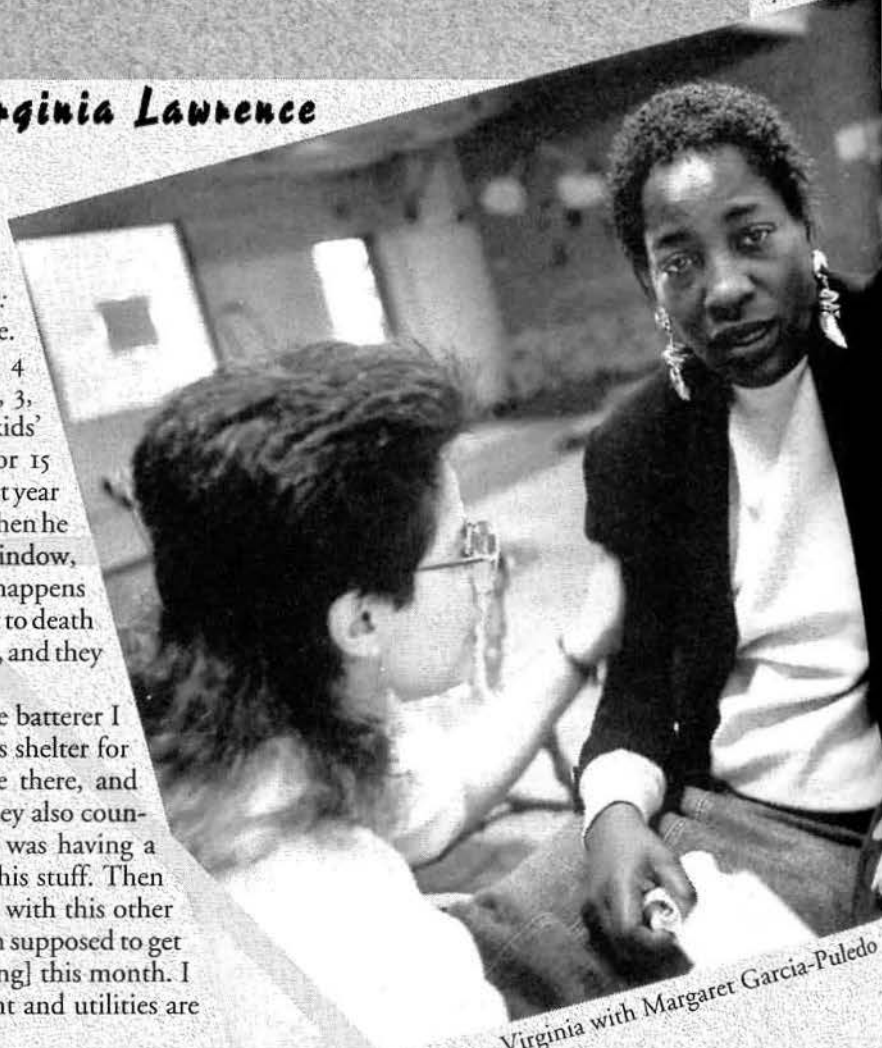
January 28, 1993

Virginia Lawrence

January 28, 1993 (top photo): My name is Virginia Lawrence. My kids are Tracy Martin, 4 and a half, Cordell Martin, 3, and Vernell Martin, 1. The kids' father, I went with him for 15 years. After our baby died last year he started beating on me. When he tried to throw me out the window, that was it. I know what happens 'cause my girlfriend was beat to death by her man. I called the cops, and they took him away.

After I got away from the batterer I got into a battered women's shelter for two months. We were safe there, and they counseled the kids. They also counseled me for drugs 'cause I was having a hard time coping with all this stuff. Then they helped me get a house with this other woman from the shelter. I'm supposed to get Section 8 [subsidized housing] this month. I get \$603 for AFDC; my rent and utilities are \$260.

I'm happy with my new life. The kids are happy. With the batterer locked up, I can go out



February 5, 1993: Virginia with Margaret Garcia-Puledo

My name is *Raquel Quinones*. I'm a volunteer at Homeplace. I'm 30 years old, born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and I have four kids—Juan Quinones, 10, Lydia Quinones, 9, Trent Burton, 5, and Trena Burton, 2. Juan lives with his dad in Concord. I transferred out here from Miami in 1987 with him. It didn't work out with us, so we split. After that we got homeless, but a friend took us in, so I wasn't on the street very long, but I see how it is.

I've been through a lot. My daughter got pneumonia when we were homeless. I've got AFDC, but I'm trying to get off. I get \$668 for AFDC and food stamps. My rent is \$645. Now I can't pay my utilities bill. I'll do whatever work is handy, but I prefer clerical work, which I've done before. Homeplace found a lady who helps me with my rent, and I try to help them back—that's why I am here, to help other people. Also, I don't like to stay around the house. There's always some problem going around the neighborhood, and I don't want to get involved.

I'm just disgusted with the system, the way it's working, with all the cutting back. With the rent, you just can't make it like that. I got thrown out of my last place because I called the housing inspector. They said the place was not suitable for kids and condemned it, but they wouldn't help me get into Section 8 [subsidized housing]. They tell me I got to be in a drug



Raquel Quinones

program to get Section 8. That isn't right. They should help people who want to help themselves. My check, last September, got cut \$75. Now they say they are going to cut again. I'm always scared I'm going to be out on the street in the end.

Raquel Quinones comes regularly to Homeplace. She now shares a lovely duplex with a friend and is taking accounting classes at Laney College in Oakland.

to find a school for my kids, then I'm going back to school. I went to Laney College for two years—data and word processing. When I get a job I can get off AFDC.

February 5, 1993: (bottom photo) The batterer found me last Sunday. I was walking back from church with the kids, and all of a sudden just felt hot heat. He had punched me from behind, and I just fell down. The lady I live with came out and tried to stop him but he just pushed her down and tore my dress off. I was there on the street, buck naked, with him kicking me and the kids screaming. I finally ran into the house, but he grabbed the baby, so I hit him with a lamp. When he grabbed the lamp and threw it at my roommate, I told her to get back—I didn't want her to get hurt. She ran to call the police and he left. They took an hour to get there with me just lying on the floor hurting.

When I got to Highland Hospital, this nurse there took pictures of how I looked. She said, "I'm doing this because my daughter is going through the same thing. You'll need these pictures some time." He fractured my ribs. He was trying to knock out my teeth, but I didn't let him.

After I got out of the hospital, I didn't go back to the house 'cause he came back that night and took all my clothes. I don't have anything but what I'm wearing. He stole my coin purse with all my money. I don't have nobody but me and my kids. My sister told him where I was, so I can't turn to my family. Child Protective Services held my check till she sees my kids are OK, so I don't have any money. I can't go to a shelter 'cause he knows them all.

The kids worry about me. They always are coming to check if I'm OK. They are all that's keeping me strong. As long as they are OK, I'm happy.

The batterer is currently in jail for this beating. Virginia recovered without going back to drugs, but still does not have a stable place to live. In late summer of 1994 she temporarily lost most of the sight in her left eye after she was hit by a car. □

all photos: Timothy Pershing

Top left: Children searching list of "care packages" sent by relatives abroad, Sarajevo.

Top right: Apartment, Mostar

Bottom left: Mother and child, Mostar.

Bottom right: Bosnian soldier, front line, Sarajevo



As the World Turns its Back

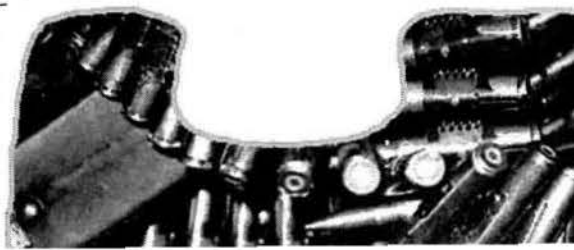
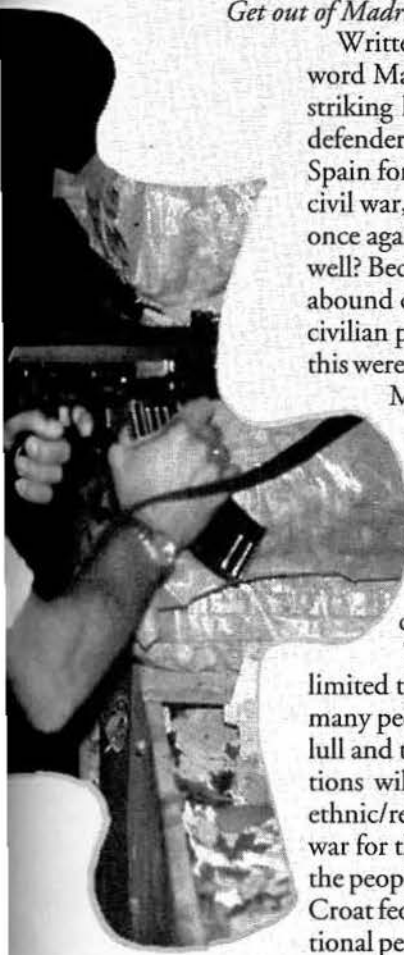
by Timothy Pershing

"A SMALL PIECE OF TWISTED STEEL, HOT AND VERY SHARP, SPRAYS OFF FROM THE SHELL; it takes the little boy in the throat. The old woman stands there, holding the hand of the dead child, looking at him stupidly, not saying anything, and men run out toward her to carry the child. At their left, at the side of the square, is a huge brilliant sign which says: *Get out of Madrid.*"

Written by Martha Gelhorn in July of 1937 during the Spanish civil war, only the word Madrid needs to be changed: Sarajevo, Vukovar, Dubrovnik, or Mostar. It is striking how much our world has not changed. The world turned its back on the defenders of Madrid, allowed the fascists to take power and rule dictatorially over Spain for decades. The world turned deaf ears to the warnings of what that war, that civil war, portended: the fascist takeover of Europe. Fifty-five years later a "civil war" once again rages in Europe. Will this war, and what it could represent, be ignored as well? Because of the complicated alliances and history of the Balkans, misconceptions abound concerning the war in Bosnia. Much is made of the intentional targeting of civilian populations, the ethnic cleansing, and forced migrations. It is spoken of as if this were a new and particularly brutal set of tactics. Brutal, yes, but certainly not new.

Most of us have no personal memory of the Second World War. We forget the siege of Stalingrad, the bombing of Dresden and London, the death camps. We ignore the internment of the Japanese-Americans. The war in Bosnia is a war like many others. It is a war like Iran and Iraq, Angola, Cambodia. People are killed in hideous, torturous ways, women are raped, men forced to kill or be killed. Children watch their friends and parents die. Even though this war is being fought in its own historical and contemporary context, it is, unfortunately, nothing new.

The war in Bosnia stands at a crucial turning point. This spring's cease-fire limited the amount of daily terror in the battle zones. For the first time in two years many people went through their days with thoughts other than simple survival. That lull and the accompanying international peace negotiations will turn the conflict down one of two roads: ethnic/religious division of Bosnian territory, or total war for the control of that territory. The war waits for the people to exert their will. At this time, the Muslim/Croat federation has agreed to the terms of the international peace proposal. The Bosnian Serbs have rejected



all photos: Timothy Pershing

Antiwar art,
Sarajevo

the agreement.

Americans typically have a tough time understanding the background of the war in the Balkans. It isn't in our national character to collectively remember ancient wounds, much less act on them. History tends to be of greater importance in the European consciousness. There are differing views as to the historical roots of this war. Some would go as far back as the Field of the Black Birds, where, in 1389, the Serbian leader Prince Lazar and his army were decimated by the Turks. This defeat on the open plain in Kosovo led to 500 years of Turkish domination of Serbia.

Despite the fact that he was a relatively new leader who fought one battle and lost, sending Serbia into 500 years of repression, Lazar has become the mythological martyr for Serbians. In 1988, his coffin began a tour of Serbia to commemorate the onset of his sixth century of martyrdom. Avenging the defeat at Kosovo by reconstructing the historical territory of ancient Greater Serbia is undeniably felt by every Serbian fighter in this war.

More current is the history of the two world wars, in which Serb battled Croat. During World War II, Zagreb's Archbishop Stepinac, fearful of atheistic communism, chose to align himself with the powerful fascist Ustashe leader Ante Pavelic. By doing so, he plunged the Catholic church into culpability in

the murder of hundreds of thousands of Jews, Gypsies, and especially Orthodox Serbians in the Jesenovac concentration camps. Even though Stepinac began to speak and act out against the Ustashe atrocities at the end of the war, his guilt through association discounted any such actions in the eyes of Serbians. He had been pictured one too many times shaking the hand of Ante Pavelic. Today, Stepinac is seen as a Croatian hero, his tomb a revered site in the cathedral in Zagreb. He was elevated

to cardinal by the Catholic church in 1952 for his resistance to Tito's communist regime. (Stepinac was imprisoned by Tito for five years after the war.) The aggrandizement of a man seen as responsible for so many deaths (or at least in the position to halt them but who instead did nothing) is one of many reasons for the mistrust and animosity between Croat and Serb.

It is undeniable that from the days of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires to the divisions of World War II, the past conflicts of the Balkans skulk in the shadows, ready to be called forward when the need arises. A typical, small example was the recent introduction of the new Croatian currency, called the kuna. The kuna was the name of the currency used under the fascist Ustashe in World War II.

Religion, another underlying force in this conflict, is often relegated to the background in the case of two of the three warring factions. Because there is no true ethnic difference between them (they are all Slavs), it is to the religious differences people often turn to express their incompatibilities. While the Bosnian government is readily identified by its Islamic religious affiliation, rarely is Croatia referred to as Catholic or Serbia as Orthodox. But it is along these lines that divisions occur and that conflict has raged throughout the history of these peoples. Serbs are Orthodox and rely on Orthodox Christian countries (Russia and Greece) for their international support. The Catholic Croatians and Slovenes have traditionally relied on Austria, Germany, and Italy. Germany and Austria were the first nations to recognize the independent state of Croatia, and lobbied heavily on its behalf for UN recognition. The

Bosnian Muslims, however, did not initially call for support from their Islamic brothers, but sought out Western allies, France, England, and the United States. It was the lack of support from these countries that forced the Bosnian government to turn for aid to the Islamic camp.

The conflict in the former Yugoslavia is in essence a civil war, yet international involvement is not only justifiable, it is historically inevitable. What became known as Yugoslavia was created out of the political climate of World War I. The United States, in Woodrow Wilson's "14 Points," raised ethnic considerations and self-determination as a basis for drawing new borders. Serbia and Montenegro were victorious and free of the Ottoman yoke. The provinces of Croatia and Slovenia, which were freed by the defeat of Austro-Hungary, feared encroachment by Italy (who had designs on portions of their territory) and rushed, in 1918, to form what became the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Serbia's association with the war's victors lent protection to the threatened nationalism of the northern Slav provinces. Serbia considered itself the senior partner in this confederation and liberator of its Slav brethren, while the Croats, Bosnians, and Slovenes preferred to see it as a more equal partnership.

The next incarnation of Yugoslavia was again born out of international conflict, this time World War II. Again, Croatia and Slovenia found themselves aligned with the losing side, but this time it was a third party, the Titoist communist partisans that, after a twisted civil war, emerged victorious. Tito himself was Croatian and a large portion of the partisan fighters were Serbs. Marshal Tito, after coming to power in 1945, managed to utilize the newly powerful communist party to spread out the strength of each small nation that made up Yugoslavia. By deriving power from an ideological base, he was able to control the individual nations and meld them into a seemingly singular entity.

The failure of Yugoslav communism on the economic front, coupled with its retreat from the postulates of democracy in the late 60s, eventually bred the nationalist movements. Had Tito opened up then, instead of clamping down, he might have been remembered as the man who created peace at last in the Balkans. But Marshal Tito died in 1980, and with him went the remains of the modern Yugoslav state. In the end, even the powerful Tito could not overcome the legacy of collective memory and the lure of nationalism.

It is not hard to find the roots of the current crisis. It was international conflict and international political negotiations that created the opportunity for Southern Slav unification, or what was to become Yugoslavia. And it was international conflict, namely the Cold War, that created the environment for what is going on today. All Balkan conflicts in the last

century have been internationalized. From the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand by a Serb terrorist (or national hero, depending on your affiliation) that launched World War I, to the Croatian alliance with the Axis powers in World War II, to the Cold War and the current crisis, the warring factions have been inextricably entwined in the shifting political face of Europe.

By the early 1990s, the Croatian leader was Franjo Tudjman, a former general and head of the right-wing Croatian Democratic Union. He utilized anti-Serb comments and actions to foment a virulent Croatian nationalism, tied to a Catholic common heritage, in an effort to deliver Croatia out of the Yugoslav federation. Slobodan Milosevic, Tudjman's counterpart in Belgrade, was utilizing the same techniques to secure support through Serbian nationalism and Orthodox brotherhood. With the Croatian Serb population finding threat in Tudjman's words and support in Milosevic's, the grassroots support for the acquisition of land to recreate the historical Greater Serbia was in place. Minority Serb populations in the Krajina area of Croatia, and in northwestern and eastern Bosnia were encouraged and supported by the Serbian-dominated Yugoslavian National Army. By the summer of 1991, the often-predicted Croatian war had begun.

The Croatian-Serbian war harkened back to the wars of the first half of the century, with the World War II derogatory terms of *Ustashe* (Croat) and *Chetnik* (Serb) used to justify any war activity. The tales of atrocities during this period rival any in modern times. By the time the UN interceded the following year, essentially freezing the battle lines but achieving no political agreement, both sides had fallen to the moral low ground. One middle-aged man, on leave from the Croatian army in the spring of 1993, spoke of coming across the remains of a murdered pregnant woman, her belly slit open and filled with kittens. True or not, these were the scenes passed on to others and to the outside world.

On March 1, 1992, a referendum on independence passed in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Six days later the U.S. and the European Community recognized Bosnia. With the calls for a Greater Serbia already unleashed, the secession of Bosnia-



Herzegovina from the Yugoslav Federation was destined to bring Bosnia into the conflict that now threatens to permanently tear it apart. While Bosnia possessed sophisticated cultural centers such as Sarajevo, the countryside was a weave of Croat, Muslim, and Serb agriculturally based villages—a hotbed of potential strife. While the shocked citizens of Sarajevo watched, the countryside went up in flames and engulfed them in war.

The Serbians seem determined to achieve by force their concept of a Greater Serbia. The leaders of the federated Muslim/Croatian Bosnian government understood this. The talk of partition, appeasement, and borders, coupled with a relative cease-fire, served the needs of both parties. It furnished political justification for the battle to come and time to prepare for it.

The Muslim/Croat federation provides for a military with the potential for serious war-making and brings with it a potential coalition of international support that could supply the hardware for total war. This will happen eventually if international proposals are continually rejected by the Bosnian Serbs. For the Croats to regain the territory lost to insurgent Serbs in its own war, it must not only have a strong Bosnia, but it must also have Bosnian allegiance. Bosnia, in turn, cannot hope to regain its lost real estate without Croatian support. The Serbian forces, meanwhile, find themselves facing a competent foe that has wisely seized the moral high ground.

People involved directly in the war view it as inextricably international. Soldiers, grandmothers, doctors, and students that I interviewed all spoke of foreign leaders as familiarly as they did their own. No matter which side they were on, they looked to the international community for support and answers. And they denounced the international community for their failings as readily as if they had voted the leaders into office themselves. Seventy-two-year-old Rosalie Kameric of Sarajevo pines for the days of JFK, and condemned virtually all current world leaders, including the Pope (Rosalie is a Catholic). When she was asked who, among living politicians, might solve the problems of Bosnia, she offered up the combination of Jimmy Carter and Mikhail Gorbachev.

Currently, the United States is seen as the primary supporter of the Bosnian Croatian federation. Posters of the American flag, with the Statue of Liberty in the center holding the Bosnian symbol of the lily aloft instead of the torch, are posted throughout Sarajevo. Clinton is perceived as a supporter of the Bosnian multi-ethnic cause, in word if not in deed. The call for the unilateral lifting of the arms embargo by the U.S. Congress was seen as an act of direct

support to the Bosnian cause.

Conversely, the Serbs speak of Russian support, and bemoan the tentative domestic position of Yeltsin. They feel it compromises Russia's ability to come to their aid. The nationalist rantings of Zhirinovsky have not fallen on deaf ears in Serbia. In fact, the longer this war plays out, the more troublesome the Zhirinovsky card may become. Because of the lack of international support to match that received by the Bosnian Muslims and Croats, Milosevic has been forced to play a crafty game, supposedly cutting off the Bosnian Serbs because of their failure to accept the current peace proposal. Milosevic's real purpose in this move is to get the economic sanctions lifted from Serbia proper by cooperating with the UN. So far Milosevic has managed to escape blame for the effects of the sanctions; he would undoubtedly receive the credit if they were lifted. His hand thus strengthened politically, he would be in a better position to administer a Greater Serbia. No one would bet on his abandonment of Radovan Karadzic and the Bosnian Serb politicians in Pale. Milosevic is well known for reining in or ruining politicians that seek to challenge him. It is quite likely that this is part of his motivation for moving against Karadzic at this time.

At this writing, the cards are on the table. With the cease-fire broken in Sarajevo, both armies are preparing for the conflict ahead. The



Rosalie
Kameric, Sarajevo

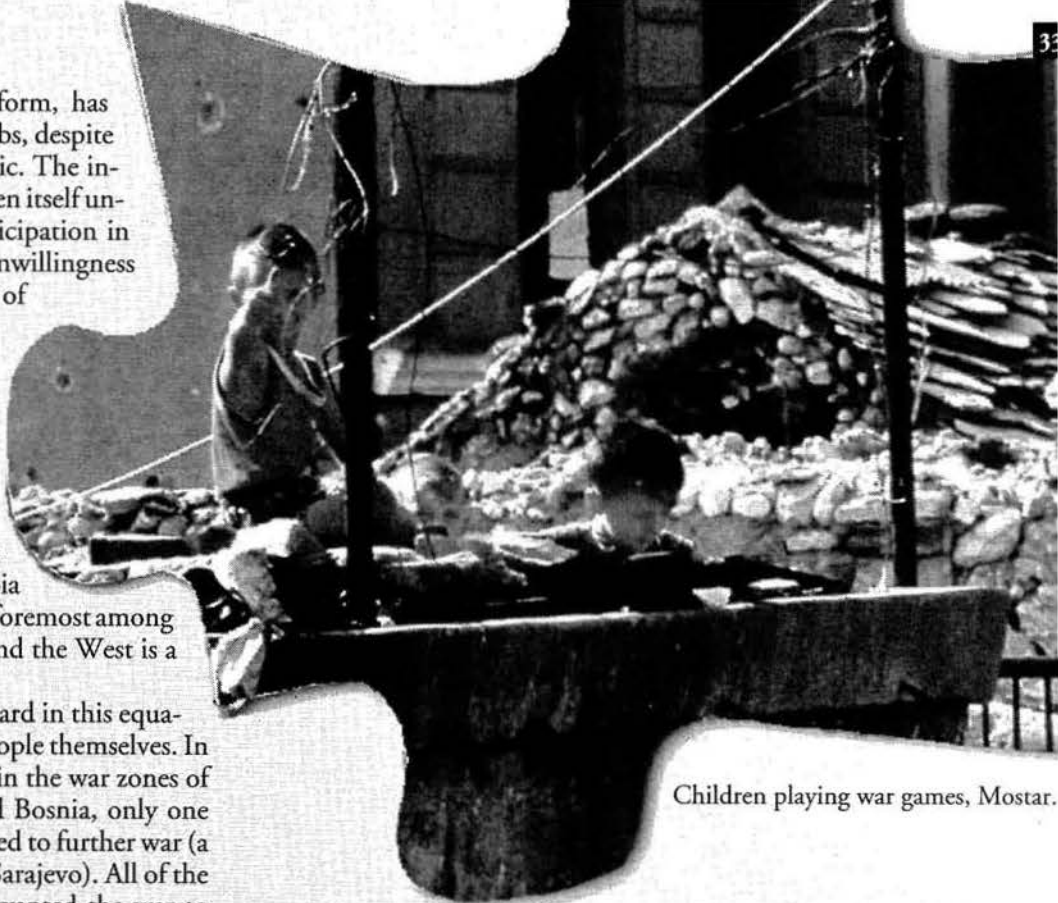


peace proposal, in its current form, has been rejected by the Bosnian Serbs, despite supposed pressure from Milosevic. The international community has proven itself unwilling to commit to open participation in the war. The reasons for this unwillingness are many, from the simple fear of being bogged down in an unwinnable conflict, to current alliances and remnant Cold War hostilities. The greatest single reason might well be the desire to avoid, at all costs, the full internationalizing of the military conflict. The thought of the New World Order lining up, Serbia with its Orthodox allies, (Russia foremost among them), against Bosnia/Croatia and the West is a genuine nightmare.

There is, however, one wild card in this equation, and that is the will of the people themselves. In dozens of interviews conducted in the war zones of Sarajevo, Mostar, and Serb-held Bosnia, only one person interviewed was committed to further war (a Serb soldier on the front line in Sarajevo). All of the dozens of others I interviewed wanted the war to end. As one Sarajevoan commented, "We used to have communism, now we have 'foolism.'" Any political solution was valid, as long as it allowed them to resume some semblance of a normal life. They were resigned to their losses, they had had enough, and they were beginning to openly express that opinion.

As in all conflict, it is the easy path to place the blame on incompetent leaders. It is more difficult to build a popular grassroots consensus for a change in direction, to blame oneself for life's hell. But in all territories concerned, Croatia, both Bosnias, and Serbia proper, this is perhaps the only route to a final, less violent solution. It is only a matter of time before the lies that have been spread, particularly on the Serbian side, are discredited and begin to work against the ruling coalitions. People in Serbia live a life twisted by mistruths that hide the realities of the camps, ethnic cleansing, or rape as a weapon of terror. For instance, they don't know the old town of Dubrovnik (before the war a favored summer resort) has been ruthlessly bombed. There is a school of thought that the embargo against Serbia has played into Milosevic's hands. By helping to restrain the flow of outside information in the form of books, magazines, and other media, the embargo has allowed Milosevic to create the facts as he sees fit.

The people of the former Yugosla-



Children playing war games, Mostar.

via must control the course of their own destiny—peace or war. Without instigation for change from below, the men in power will choose their own course. Unfortunately, there is no tradition of public protest in the recent history of ex-Yugoslavia, so activist groups like the Soros Foundation and Women in Black find their numbers small and their impact minimal. But with the worsening conditions, combined with the growth of factual information reaching those who need it, these numbers may grow. Like the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, the initial courage of a few can lead to a change in political structure. Without that change, today's writers, like Gelhorn before them, will continue to witness the face of war. □

READING:

A Witness to Genocide by Roy Gutman, Macmillan; *Mass Rape: The War Against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, edited by Alexandra Stiglmayer, University of Nebraska Press; *Balkan Ghosts* by Robert D. Kaplan, Vintage Books; *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Balkan War* by Misha Glenny, Penguin; *Ethnic Nationalism: The Tragic Death of Yugoslavia* by Bogdan Denitch, University of Minnesota Press; *Face of War* by Martha Gelhorn; *Sarajevo: A War Journal* by Zlarko Dizdarevic, Fromm.

Timothy Pershing is a freelance photographer and writer, working in places as diverse as Bosnia and Haiti. Mr. Pershing resides in Jersey City and Los Angeles where he regularly exhibits his photographs and mixed-media art.




Pounds for Money

by Arl Spencer Nadel

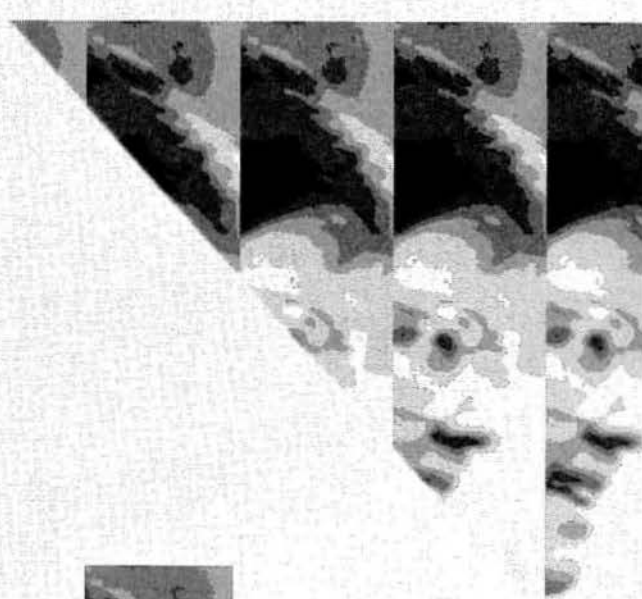
jenny craig says
lose weight and help others
jenny gives money to easter seals
money for pounds
pounds for money
well jenny
I will not lose weight
and help people
by killing myself
slowly
or quick
by hurting my heart
destroying the electrolyte balance
in my body
I will not lose weight
and help people
by looking acceptable
and less scary to them
no, goddamn it jenny
i will not lose weight
and help people
to forget the goddess
further oppress fat people
to humiliate children
to pretend that your billion dollar diet industry
gives a fuck about anything
other than the almighty dollar

You know I thought anorexia
meant tiny stick womyn
holocaust survivors
I have learned a new thing
anorexia means dieting until
you hurt yourself
and not caring
because it's better to be dead
than fat.
anorexia can be





a good sized woman
having tachycardia
and chest pains from a too long
diet
when even the doctor says "Eat more"
anorexia is the idea that
women must lose weight
to be employed
to be loved
to be ok
or to be dead.

I hate wanting to be thinner than I am
wanting the acceptance
of the world
to be able to fit into clothes
to get jobs
to be found attractive
to have people smile at me
instead of open or held-in disgust
because wanting all that
means wanting to hurt myself



because I am a fat woman
and the price of thinness
is my health
which has already been
eroded by an environment
being destroyed by
the same corporations who brought us
Jenny Craig
who's helping people
by killing fat people
and making herself
and her stockholders
rich.



SISTER SPIRIT



All hell broke loose for the lesbian couple Brenda and Wanda Henson late last year, a few months after they settled in the rural town of Overt, Mississippi, population 200. They had moved there from the Gulf Coast with the purpose of building a feminist center where, in addition to offering a multitude of educational and social services, they would continue to hold an annual Gulf Coast women's music festival. To report on their progress, they published a newsletter in October 1993. That's when the trouble began. The newsletter got in the wrong hands—those of local right-wing Christian leaders, who were dismayed to learn that their new neighbors were proud lesbians, intent on spreading a doctrine of feminism and anti-racism. Physical attacks and threats followed prominent editorials in the local papers, which characterized the Hensons' retreat, Camp Sister Spirit, as a "dormitory to house the stray lesbians of the world." Charges of satanic influence followed.

On November 8 the Hensons found a dead dog draped over their mailbox. The dog had been shot in the abdomen and the mailbox pierced by a nine-millimeter bullet and covered by sanitary napkins. The Hensons and volunteers at Camp Sister Spirit feared for their lives. They turned for help to government representatives and national civil rights organizations, including the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Attorney General Janet Reno ordered an investigation. In July 1994 a congressional hearing led by Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NYC) and Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.) took place in Jackson, Mississippi, to determine whether local law enforcement officials were adequately protecting the residents of Camp Sister Spirit from threats based on their sexual orientation. A report will be submitted to the Judiciary Committee and the House of Representatives before any further action is taken.

The following interview was compiled by Breakthrough from a series of interviews and programs conducted in April 1994 when Brenda and Wanda Henson were hosted in San Francisco to raise funds for an emergency generator and other items needed to boost their security at Camp Sister Spirit. Letters of support and financial donations continue to be appreciated—contact Camp Sister Spirit Feminist Education Retreat, PO Box 12, Overt, MS 39464, 601-344-1411 (voice/FAX), 601-344-2005 (voice), sisterspir@aol.com (e-mail).

INTERVIEW WITH BRENDA AND WANDA HENSON





photo: Cathy Cade

Breakthrough: What brought you to Ovett, Mississippi?

Brenda: We came to Ovett in July 1993 with the best of intentions about building an education center in rural Mississippi, 80 miles from where we had been working for the past four years. We've had a non-profit organization on the Gulf Coast making available food, clothing, and educational opportunities for a long time. In October someone stole our newsletter from our mailbox—the term “Lesbian” was used in the newsletter a couple of times and that was all it took. They distributed thousands and thousands (I'm not exaggerating) copies of that newsletter around the country.

BT: You went with a humanitarian vision, but all they heard was the term “lesbian.”

Brenda: That became the only thing that they were focused on to inflame the prejudice of the people.

Wanda: On November 8, when we went out to the mailbox and there was a dog that had been murdered, the sheriff's deputy was called to come out.

Brenda: His first question was to my daughter: “Do you all have Blacks in your organization?”

Wanda: We said, somebody's saying “die bitches” to us. A nine-millimeter bullet is a typical bullet used by police and we were very worried about it because Brenda's daughter is a whistleblower on the Harrison County deputy sheriff's detention center. For four years she's been working on prison reform. She's been followed and she's been watched. So anyway, we were very scared.

The gunshots started on November 24. There were five gunshots fired at the front gate and by the time we got there the perpetrator was gone. And the

folks that were coming to help us, they started not coming. Our numbers started dwindling. On November 25, Thanksgiving, we found a brown paper bag at the front gate and it said “Leave Queers Now.” Queers spelled “Q-E-E-R-'S.”

Brenda: Evidence that we need an education center in Ovett!

Wanda: There was also a spent bullet shell found right beside it. It was a really big casing. That afternoon my daughter, who is 22 years old, was accosted by a man at the front gate trying to push his way in. He started saying to her things like “you

better read between the lines, little girl, you better get out of here.” So I was very perturbed.

The weekend of our Lesbian conference was the next weekend, December 3, so I decided I would do the escort. We escort people off and on our property. So I went down to the gate and a sister named Zoe was with me. She locked the gate and I was looking over her shoulder and I saw this big flash. And just “Boom!”—an incredible noise. We were very shook up by this, believe me. Deputy Holifield came out and he said, “Aw, it's kids. Pranks. Acetylene balloons.” So it was beginning to look like a war between the men and the women because they were believing the men.

Brenda: Myron Holifield is the deputy sheriff who was quoted in the *Mobile Register* as saying that we were filth and that the children of Ovett should not have to look at us. He also said that everybody knows that all your violent crime is committed by homosexuals. And he was the man we had to call on all these cases.

BT: Did you have any initial warnings that the community of Ovett would be hostile to your settling there?

Brenda: When we first moved to Ovett, I asked lots of questions. The administrator of Jones County assured me that it was our land, that we could do whatever we wanted on the land and welcomed us to the county. And the county still has refused to take a stand on this, and is not against us. But the Congress-



man for the district, Mike Parker, has come forward and taken a really hard core stand.

Wanda: Because Mike Parker says, I am the representative from that district, and Barney Frank, you don't come messing in my district.

Brenda: Mr. Parker represents Baptist ministers, not us. So as taxpayers we don't have representation.

Wanda: Two days after our Lesbian conference they had a town meeting. We were scared to death. What in the world is gonna happen? They called this meeting in the community in Ovett, and I'm gonna tell you something that the media didn't report right. It wasn't a community meeting. It wasn't the town of Ovett that rose up against us. It was Baptist ministers. A minister came from Jackson, Mississippi, and he brought his congregation with him. A minister came from Waynesboro, and they bused in people from all the surrounding towns. This was a Baptist-led, fundamentalist terrorist meeting. If they were there to denounce us because we were Black everybody would have understood that it would be a conspiracy to violate our civil rights, or if we were Jewish. But because we are Lesbian, nobody got it. They held their town meeting and they said things like, "We made a mistake 30 years ago," referring to the 1964 civil rights law.

I spent an hour with a woman counseling her because she overheard a man say it was time to get out the white sheets. I can't tell you the fear that went through me that night. Two hundred and fifty people from my state—my state representative was there—and they denounced me. I am *not* a second class citizen. You hear me? I have lost jobs because I am a Lesbian. I have been refused housing because I'm a Lesbian. I lost my children for four years! I am not angry—I am outraged.

After that meeting we got some of the most vulgar phone calls. I was raised in a very protective family. I never even heard a cuss word until I was about 19 years old and at that time I had been married three years and had two kids. I can't tell you what that did to me to hear men cussing and calling me names.

Anyhow, gunshots started being fired all around the parameters of our land. December 20 there were gunshots at the front gate. Again the perpetrators were gone. You see, we have to walk to get where we're going on this land. We have an old vehicle—a 1978 Chevrolet—and by the time it's warmed up they're gone. On Christmas night my son, 20 years old, finest man you'll ever meet, he picks up the phone at 11:38 and this guy says, "You're dead, motherfucker, before the night is over." My baby came to me and he was shaking and he was whiter than I had ever seen him before. He had changed two shades whiter. My child has served in the U.S. Navy and he was an honor recruit for his company and he's tough. I can't tell you what that meant to me to see that look on my son's face, and so we stayed up all night watching and waiting for them to come for us.

Brenda: We had caller ID so we had his phone number. We called the police and the next day they came out. He confessed. When I went down to swear out the warrant I wanted the maximum of whatever

I could swear out and the woman there agreed that it should be really strong charges. But by the time she talked to the sheriff's office and I had a chance to get back down there they would only allow me to swear out a warrant for telephone harassment.

Wanda: On January 4 they held another town meeting. Four hundred folks were bused in. Brenda and I did not attend either of the meetings because we were afraid of being murdered. There's so few of us and so many of them. They vowed they were going to find a way to oust us from the land. They showed "The Gay Agenda" [an anti-gay video produced by the Christian Right].

Brenda: And the sheriff passed around the collection box to raise



photo: Cathy Cade



photo: Cathy Cade

money for their defense fund.

BT: *You've been politically active for a long time. Tell us about your history.*

Wanda: We work in a place where women have nothing. One in three Mississippi women read below a third-grade level. We are the poorest state in the nation with the highest infant mortality rate. Most Southern women in the poor and working class are marrying at age 16. We feel that in order for women to live their lives economic security must be within their grasp. We believe the way to empower people is through education. Brenda and I are both adult educators with eight classes remaining to complete our doctorate degrees in education.

Brenda: We found our voices because Robin Tyler brought the Southern Women's Music Comedy Festival into Georgia and we had an opportunity to go. That was nine years ago. We cried for four days because it was the first time we had come in contact

When the attacks against Camp Sister Spirit began, Brenda and Wanda circulated a statement in Overt and across the country to clarify their mission as lesbian feminist educators (excerpted here).

We are a community-based IRS recognized 501-(C)3 charitable organization committed to providing people counseling, information, education, referral advocacy and meeting space to address social issues. These include but are not limited to racism, sexism, family violence and abuse, rape, incest, homophobia, ableism, fat oppression, classism, recovery from substance abuse, ageism, job equity, hunger, housing, AIDS, religious freedom, ecology, human rights and peace.

We are not a member organization. There are no paid officers. We are all volunteers. Volunteers are made up primarily of women who come to do this important work. We are a very diverse organization who welcomes people from all walks of life. We are adult educators, carpenters, doctors, nurses, drywall finishers, attorneys, social workers, welders, laborers, homemakers, community organizers, counselors. Some of us are Lesbians, some of us are non-Lesbians. Some of us are people of color, some are white, some are Christian, some are Jewish, some are deaf, some are disabled, some are old, some are young, some are fat, some are thin. All of us are feminists and citizens of the U.S.A. We are committed to living in a non-oppressive manner. We are actively working to end oppression in the lives of others.

We are a multi-issue organization. Our work on the Mississippi Gulf Coast currently consists of operation of the Sister Spirit food pantry for people in need of food. We have never turned away anyone who is in need of food.

with the Lesbian culture and it was an overwhelming experience and we went home changed from that experience and determined that we were not going to let go of this. That we were going to have more and so we had a garage sale and sold everything we owned and went to the Michigan Women's Music Festival that year. We really wanted to bring this culture back home with us and we thought maybe we could have a bookstore. We worked very hard that next year as craftswomen at the festivals. We called ourselves Dixie Dykes.

The name of our bookstore was Southern Wild Sisters Unlimited, which we ran from 1987 to 1991. We were attacked somewhat, not a lot, by the Baptists there on the coast but it really wasn't anything like now and there were so many people glad that we were there. But we soon learned that a bookstore is a very middle-class place to be. You have to have money to be there. The people who came in needing the books didn't have the money to buy 'em. They needed support, they needed counseling. So we became more of a crisis center than we were a retail business. From the crisis center was born Sister Spirit Inc., our non-profit organization.

Wanda: Then the war broke out—when you live in the poorest state in the nation the military is your number one employer. Anyway, most of the folks were gone because of the war and so we made a decision to close the bookstore.

BT: *What is it like to organize in the South?*

Wanda: It is very, very hard to get women together when they're in as hostile a space as Mississippi. Being in California people have lots of organized groups. But in the rural areas, groups are not organized like that. They're very hard to find.

BT: *Tell us about the time you spent in Central America.*

Brenda: Wanda was invited to attend the 10th annual Gay and Lesbian Foundation conference in Boston in 1988.

Wanda: Yeah, it was a wonderful experience except for these women were middle class. It's not that they tried to make me feel bad but it was my internalized classism. They were talking about their life's work and they did what they call international peace work. And I said, "Wowwee!" This one woman said she was going to go spend all this time in El Salvador with COMADRES [a Salvadoran women's federation] and walk with the women and keep the women from being murdered. I said, "Well, I tell you what. If I ever had the money to go do that, I'd do it."

Well, lo and behold, a year and a half later, in 1989, I get a phone call and it's this woman and she says, "Listen, I remember what you said. Well, we're gonna have this conference called the FEDEFAM [a Latin American human rights federation] confer-

ence in El Salvador—would you like to go?" And I said, "Oh yes, I'd love to go."

There's supposed to have been 50 people at this conference. It was two weeks before the woman and her daughter and the six Jesuits were killed, which was six months after Cristiani took the presidency. So anyhow I get there and I never forget looking around and counting how many of us there were. It was 13! One of the churches had been tear gassed two weeks before we went and folks were afraid and had dropped out.

So anyhow, coming from where I've come from I didn't have the language. I didn't know what "governmental repression," or "imperialism" was—I knew the definition of the words, but I never thought about it in relation to the U.S. government. And it was very interesting to sit in these workshops and to be talking to the folks and say wait a minute, let me tell you what it's like in Mississippi. We have beatings happening in our jails and we have stuff like bodies turning up in the river, that's commonplace—but we don't call it a death squad. Mississippi is called the dumping ground because of the number of bodies that turn up.

Brenda: All the time. They're never identified.

Wanda: It's horrible. So in El Salvador I learned the links. It gave me a language in which to talk about repression. Also I got a really good lesson about fear. I mean you have to be past the fear. Because fear limits what you do.

A lot of times I can look back and see how something prepared me for the next step in community organizing. Because when I came back to the U.S. I was really changed. I mean, when you're in a place where you don't know if you've got your next breath or not, every minute has to count. The more I looked around me the more I could see people were hungry, they needed clothes.

BT: How do you feel about prospects for change in your current situation?

Brenda: People better start speaking up. People better wake up and go out in the streets with whatever it takes to get 'em out there or we're gonna lose all the ground that was made a hundred years ago in our behalf.

Wanda: If we had not been able to get the word out



photo: Cathy Cade

outside of Mississippi I think we'd be dead by now.

Brenda: This is a project for all, not just us. I think the Gay and Lesbian community has a big responsibility in what is happening to us. Everytime you don't come out in the classroom, everytime you don't come out to your family, everytime you don't come out on the job, it allows these people to define who we are.

Wanda: Southern women are steel magnolias to the core. Everybody's a leader and once you begin to think you're a leader you better forget it. And you know we're gonna continue to see cases like ours. It's all over the country. It's not an isolated thing. That's why this is a very clear-cut case for the Justice Department and also for the Clinton administration to do something—we have to get our rights. This is a war against our people. □

On the evening of October 8, 1994, the bodies of two young gay men were found lying across railroad tracks just outside the town of Laurel, Miss., which is 15 miles from Overt. Robert Walters, 34, and Joseph Shoemaker, 24, were shot in the head at point-blank range with a .22 caliber pistol. Local authorities claim the murders were simply the result of a random robbery attempt and had nothing to do with the men's homosexuality. National lesbian and gay activists, including the Hensons, attribute the deaths to the intense

atmosphere of hatred towards gays in Jones County, pointing to over 64 incidents of violence, harassment, and intimidation committed against Camp Sister Spirit in just the past year. "The significance of the deaths of Ray and Joe are not lost on Brenda and me," said Wanda Henson. "The message is clear: there's no place to go and no place to hide—not for gay people—not in Mississippi." Direct letters and phone calls to Attorney General Janet Reno demanding a federal investigation of the murders.

AVIDAN, from p17

families have been working and paying taxes like everybody else. Every single bill that we see coming out of Washington has some kind of trailer on it that wants to deny benefits. One ugly manifestation of this was in the earthquake in the San Fernando Valley earlier this year where undocumented victims of the earthquake were denied all but short-term emergency aid. All long-term resettlement or housing or anything like that was denied. National health-care reform definitely does not include the undocumented—it explicitly excludes them.

Or take Operation Blockade in El Paso, where the INS saturated a 20-mile strip of the border with armed Border Patrol. It resulted, short term, in a major decrease in the number of undocumented crossings; however, it also had a very negative impact on the commerce in that area. The fact is that there are just not enough resources in the INS to do that all the way along the border. We share a 2,000-mile-plus border with Mexico, and all a blockade does is move the crossings to another point. In San Diego the INS is installing three-meter-high metal fences with 24-hour lights and infra-red photography. The American Friends Service Committee has extensive testimony of human-rights violations—rapes, people being shot in the back—which are very commonplace, and no INS or Border Patrol official has ever been convicted of any of those violations. There is absolutely no civilian oversight of the INS or the Border Patrol.

The U.S. just signed the biggest trade agreement in the western hemisphere, NAFTA. Everywhere else in the world when economic communities are brokered, in Europe and Asia for example, immigration is included as a factor. Well, NAFTA includes the free movement of goods, services, capital, but not people. The fact is, with or without NAFTA, immigration happens, because the economy to a large extent controls immigration. You can dig a ditch as deep as you want and build a wall as high as you want, but when people have to move they will move, and they will find a way to get here. But now, what they are talking about doing is increasing the military presence on the border. Senator Barbara Boxer is proposing using the National Guard in civilian capacity. As soon as you get a military force on the border, you are going to have increased human-rights violations.

I can't see that there is anything positive toward improving relationships between the U.S. and Mexico by creating a military presence on the border. The U.S. finally took all of their forces out of Berlin, and we are applauding the tearing down of the Berlin Wall and that separation—and we are building one on our border with Mexico.

BT: Why is there something particularly politically satisfying about militarization, something that appeals to people to see the walls go up?

LA: I think it makes people think that the government is doing something to control illegal immigration. People say, "We are losing control of the border." It goes to the depths of people's belief in sovereignty and being able to have control over that.

BT: So many news stories that focus on immigration show people crossing the border—swimming, running—and they are made to seem very arrogant about how easy it is to cross the border.

LA: The swarming hordes are invading us and they are all brown. How many times have we seen that film clip of the infra-red camera? So people are scared that the state is getting too brown. And it is getting brown. By the year 2000 whites are going to be in the minority in this state. Some people are real scared: what does it mean to be an American? What is American culture?

An all too common refrain is that immigrants do not assimilate like they used to. A lot of people, especially liberals, will say America is a country of immigrants. It's true and they will acknowledge it. How many generations back do you have to go to when your parents or grandparents or great-grandparents come to the U.S.? Even the most conservative people have to acknowledge that. But they will say, "That was then, and this is now. It is different now." But the fact is that immigrants assimilate every bit as rapidly now as they ever did. They learn English at exactly the same rate as they ever did. They far surpass earlier generations in terms of earnings, just like immigrants always have.

BT: What they don't do now is come from Europe.

LA: Actually, that's not true. The common stereotype of who undocumented immigrants are is not based on reality. The fact is, over 60 percent of undocumented immigrants are Western Europeans and others that are here on visa overstay. But people react to the scare-mongering that is going on. For example, many people are incredibly annoyed when they go to City Hall or Macy's or wherever it is they go, and the person that is assisting them does not speak English very well. That just drives people up the wall.

It is appalling to me how anti-Arab sentiment is so socially acceptable in this society. You see it and hear it on all of the talk shows, in the movies, and in the newspapers. Clearly, in this country laws have always supported superiority of the white property-owning classes. It is pretty easy for a lot of people to just latch on to that: that is what they grew up with. □

No Human Being Is Illegal

Immigrant Rights Action Pledge

THE IMMIGRANT RIGHTS ACTION PLEDGE WAS organized to oppose the wave of immigrant-bashing in California represented by Proposition 187 on the November 1994 ballot. This proposition denies public education, health and social services to people who cannot prove legal immigration status. It directs educators, health workers, and other social-service providers to verify immigration status and to report to the INS people lacking documents or otherwise suspected of illegal immigration status.

Proposition 187 passed with nearly 60 percent of

the vote. However, more than a thousand teachers and other school workers, health workers and social-service providers have declared that they will not comply with its provisions. By signing the Pledge, providers refuse to act as agents of the INS. They pledge to remain true to the human rights principles that education and medical care are universal human rights. There is also a version of the Pledge for people who, while not providers of public services, want to make a personal and political statement of opposition to attacks on immigrants. Both versions are printed below. □

I Refuse to Cooperate in Attacks on Immigrants

As a teacher or other school worker, health-care worker, or provider of other social services that would be denied by Proposition 187, I pledge that I will continue to provide services to all who request them, that I will refuse to verify immigration status as required by Proposition 187, that I will support others who refuse to cooperate, and that I will urge others to do the same.

Signature

I Pledge to Resist Attacks on Immigrants

In the face of Proposition 187 on the November ballot and other state and federal legislation that promotes anti-immigrant public sentiment, I pledge to join with others to actively support and promote the civil and human rights of all immigrants and to stand against racist attacks.

I pledge to work to secure the rights of all people to health care, education, housing and employment through educating, organizing, lobbying, leafleting, marching in vigils or pickets, or acts of civil disobedience as my conscience leads me.

Signature

For copies of these pledges or for more information about ways to fight Proposition 187 and other racist attacks on immigrants, call the Immigrant Rights Action Pledge at (510) 297-4061 or write the Pledge at 3871 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, CA 94611.

letters from our readers

eritrea update

Karen A. Hauser, a long-time Eritrea solidarity activist in the U.S., has been living in Eritrea since 1992. These excerpts from her recent letter update the information in "Eritrea, Dawn," which appeared in Breakthrough, Spring 1994.

GREETINGS FROM ASMARA! THIS IS STILL AN easygoing city—peaceful, friendly, clean, and relatively safe. It's good to wave hello each morning to the gardener who tends the park opposite my house and to the man who sweeps the street, to chat with the neighborhood merchants, to justify my work and dietary habits to the owner of the restaurant several doors away who seems to have taken on the role of surrogate mother.

A ten-year-old named Futsum who lives along my route to the office broke through my perpetual shyness one day with "What time eez it?" and a winning grin and eyes that could compete with the North Star. Now when I round the corner his buddies start shouting and giggling and generally whooping, and then cluster to shake my hand. Often I am appalled by how cold their hands are: they play outside wearing the thinnest of ragged clothes. One day I met Futsum coming home from school. The sleeves of his light-blue uniform sweater (which comprises the bulk of the uniform for boys; girls are supposed to wear a jumper) had been trimmed above the elbow and the rest was so hole-riddled as to form barely a vest over his patched clothes; his book bag, equally tattered, was slung over his shoulder with a piece of twine many times broken and knotted. His school clothes are his best.

Across the country, food shortages spell c-r-i-s-i-s. After getting off to an optimistic start, last summer's rains failed in August, at the end of the season, and thus so did 75 percent of the harvest. This is in a country whose farms can produce only half its needs in a good year. Last winter I traveled a few times to the southern part of the country, which should be a major food-producing area, and saw all along the road fields of dried and stunted corn and wheat, their shafts standing no more than a yard tall, deceptively pretty and golden in the sun; these yielded fodder for the livestock but filled no human stomachs. Each person whom I questioned about the harvest had the same answer: there was none, uttered with a shrug and a glance upwards at the sky. It is deeply humbling to stand in the dust and have such sad

conversations. One wishes to have containers full of grain at one's command, to have warehouses full of irrigation pipes and fertilizers and the means to help people implement smart ideas for alternative cottage industries. One wishes not to hand out charity, but somehow to help even out the imbalances of wealth and opportunity—so that these people could stop relying on their God for the basics of sustenance. It is time.

Meanwhile, as neither the government nor the private sector can afford to import the needed food commercially, the bulk of the population once again needs to rely on food aid. And this always means not enough. Of the total 350,000 metric tons the government has requested for 1994, less than a third has been pledged, and not even all of that has arrived. Here in Asmara signs of food shortages are appearing. Elderly women wearing the desperate look of hunger might approach a well-dressed Eritrean and ask quietly, apologetically, for help. More and more people, including children, beg from foreigners. This is remarkable because last year there was no one begging; it is not a behavior tolerated by the government or the society at large.

One is still struck with the sincerity of the country's policymakers and department line staff—who have remained true to the egalitarian ideals of the liberation struggle—and perhaps particularly of those posted outside of Asmara who are still living in tents and shacks and don't have enough water or supplies, who are struggling to make this experiment successful.

The EPLF held its Third Congress in February, up in Nacfa. It changed its name to People's Front for Democracy and Justice, clearly the basis for a party, when political parties are allowed. Until then, it's simply a "movement." One that has a controlling interest in the government, and will have for quite some time. Whatever one might say about this in terms of the rapidity or slowness of building democracy—and I wouldn't really say there's a problem—it does lend stability. And stability is a quality that Eritreans value most highly—understandably.

For three months I helped team-teach an intensive English improvement class for 18 fighters who work for the Ministry of Information and Culture. Ranging in age from about 30 to 40, they all joined the Front in the 1970s; most of them were at one point frontline fighters; one was a POW for

11 years. Now they are camerapersons and news readers on TV and radio and newspaper reporters and researchers, all eager to improve their English. Their thirst to learn was not just about bettering themselves, but also about helping Eritrea get ahead—about the post-war phase of the liberation struggle to which they've committed their lives. While we worked hard and laughed often, many quiet moments in our classroom also testified to the price that so many paid in order for us to be enjoying peace in Asmara today. I held my breath each time I called on Berhane, one of the class's best writers, because on a bad day he had trouble speaking; the left half of his jaw has been slowly and painfully reconstructed. My heart felt pinched each time Almaz, a feisty newspaper reporter, struggled to hold her dictionary open and write at the same time, all with one arm. To a shocking degree, the class's fiction writing was filled with accidents and traumas—as if their pain needed to bubble up. The country has much healing yet to do.

Despite these challenges, the country is valiantly trying to get somewhere. There have been dramatic changes in the three years since the war ended. Everywhere one looks in Asmara things have been fixed, painted, expanded. Downtown, the trees have been trimmed and all the parks

replanted. The municipality has bought a couple of new trash collection trucks, and small armies of street-sweepers hit the boulevards at 6 a.m. every day. (A new platoon of poor, young, single mothers has also been hired for this; they wear blue smocks over their dresses and push small green wheelbarrows.) The shops are full of goods (which only people who have relatives who send money from abroad can afford to buy) and the roads are practically clogged with cars.

The country's main roads are all under repair; the Massawa-Asmara artery has been widened and resurfaced. The Massawa port is being expanded, and a major thrust to repair war-damaged buildings downtown is underway. Actually, one finds new construction everywhere one goes outside of Asmara. On the edges of practically every village there are piles of stones: homes waiting to be built. Even in the most remote areas, one sees the sun glinting off the corrugated metal roofs of modest new schoolhouses and clinics, usually funded in part with community contributions—meaning a goat here, 10 *birr* (\$2) or a day of labor there. People remain poor, but they are determined to make something better out of whatever they have. Across the country, there is still something special in the air—communities are pulling together, rebuilding, rejuvenating, rebirthing their nation.

more on trafficking

I WAS IMPRESSED AND DEPRESSED BY JUDITH Mirkinson's article on global trafficking of women [*Breakthrough*, Spring 1994]. I hope that the following points may be of help/interest:

1. The number of foreign women being prostituted in Japan was greatly underestimated in the article. There are 300,000 illegal foreign workers in Japan, of whom half are women exploited as sex labor (brides and prostitutes).
2. The number of prostitutes in Vietnam is estimated by some to be 600,000. Official sources put this at 300,000. There has been a relocation of Australian businessmen from Bangkok to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), motivated by the fear of AIDS and the lower cost of sex labor. In particular there has been a significant number of pedophiles moving into Vietnam. It has become an established practice for Japanese business delegations visiting Vietnam to include nightclubs and hotels that cater for sex tourism. These clubs and hotels are owned by government ministries, the army, and private business people. In Hanoi, young Japanese men working for the *sogo shosha* (large trading companies) have been involved in the rape of

young Japanese women studying in Hanoi who live in the same dormitories. A Japanese man working for a large Japanese trading company was involved in four incidents of rape and two of attempted rape.

3. In 1993, the newspaper *Lao Dong* reported that women in a traditional dance troupe sent to Japan by the Vietnamese government were made to dance naked and forced into prostitution for three months before being released. (I can send the article if you wish.)
4. In a recent edition of the *Straits Times* (Singapore) I read a number of advertisements for domestic servants. The advertisements offer "customized" maids, "disciplined," etc. It is worth examining the classified ad section of the Singapore papers.

In solidarity,

Gerard Greenfield
Asian Studies
Murdoch University
Murdoch WA 6150 Australia
(received via electronic mail)

Haiti On The Brink

Haiti On The Brink

Haiti On The Brink

Haiti On The Brink

Haiti On The Brink

Haiti On The Brink

Haiti On The Brink

In the last issue of Breakthrough, numerous articles discussed the political situation in Haiti resulting from the coup d'état. On October 15, 1994, Jean-Bertrand Aristide returned to Haiti to take his rightful place as its democratically elected president. He did so, however, only as a result of an American intervention of 20,000 U.S. troops.

On the eve of Aristide's return Breakthrough spoke with Max Blanchet, a Haitian national and member of the San Francisco Bay Area Haitian-American Council.

Breakthrough: *What impact do you think the current U.S. occupation of Haiti is going to have on the prospects for real democracy over the next period of time?*

Max Blanchet: One of the key issues remains the disarming of the paramilitary forces in Haiti. Repression has been a major stumbling block. It has done a lot of damage to the popular organizations. Unless the threat of repression can be lifted altogether from Haitian society, I don't see how we are going to have a functioning democracy. This means the disarmament of the paramilitary forces and the thorough restructuring of the army, leaving in only elements that have proven themselves to be fair towards the population. Another key issue has to do with the sort of economic program that will be put into place. One can't divorce democratic practice from the overall economic environment. There is good reason to be concerned, because President Aristide has submitted a plan to the IMF and the World Bank that smacks of pure free-market economics. In a country like Haiti, this is likely to have a detrimental impact on the poor—the majority of the population. It is hard for me to imagine that such an economic program could be implemented in a democratic society. At the very least, this program should be debated by parliament and there should be a complete airing of its implications in the public arena. If this program were to be applied, the end result might be to perhaps weaken civil society even more than before—because people will probably become overwhelmed about the problem of survival and it will make things that much harder in Haiti.

BT: *How do you assess the strength, or the potential strength, of the popular organizations as they enter into this complicated new period?*

MB: This is a very difficult question, one that I have

Interview with
Max Blanchet

been wrestling with at night. I keep asking myself that question. What is the sort of correlation of forces? Let's look at the various factors. One of the main actors is, of course, the popular sector. The popular movement has very deep roots, and even though it has been very hard hit since the *coup d'état*, I don't believe that it has been destroyed. At the first opportunity, it is going to reemerge. Linked with the popular movement is President Aristide himself, whose popularity, if anything, has probably grown in the last three years.

However, I think there are some inherent weaknesses to the movement in Haiti. First of all, I don't believe that there is really a structure at the national level—for many reasons. I think that Haiti is slowly emerging from over 30 years of brutal dictatorship, and the people have never had the space in which to create a national structure. There simply has not been that much time to build a national structure that would really provide backbone to the hundreds of grassroots organizations that emerged in the last 10 to 15 years in Haiti.

Also, if you look at the Lavalas movement the ideology has been somewhat ill defined. It has been a mix of theology of liberation, some socialist ideas, and also nationalism. But it's a kind of mix that hasn't produced clarity or defined what the movement is really all about. The movement has spoken about empowering the poor (which is very, very good) and it talks about a mass campaign to eliminate illiteracy, to provide people with work, to eliminate the health problems that are facing the country. But I think that there has been, also, a certain lack of coherence in developing a concrete political program.

The movement is headed for elections that are coming up in January to partially renew parliament without, first of all, a coherent organization and without a clear-cut political strategy. The consequences of that may be very serious. The movement may end up being divided, which would probably benefit the right, and this would mean the effective control of parliament would be lost.

BT: What are other factors?

MB: Clearly, another major actor is the Haitian right. They have been dealt a severe blow. These were people, after all, who believed that somehow the Americans would keep on supporting the Haitian army and the status quo. Now, I suspect that the U.S. will try everything it can to do away with the anachronistic capitalism—really it's more like feudalism—and replace it with something more modern. I'm not sure how much room that will leave for the Haitian oligarchy. They certainly have the means and the education to recycle themselves. Whether or not they have the will to do so is a different matter. Some people will probably oppose whatever the Americans

are trying to do; there are others that will make their peace within it and try to take full advantage of it.

Of course the big actor now is the American government, with its 20,000 U.S. troops. But one thing is very clear, these troops are not going to stay in Haiti very long. The bulk of the troops will probably be gone by March of next year, although the next phase—which will be more of a multinational phase—will get its backbone from the U.S. From here on, I believe the U.S. will keep a very low profile, although it will continue to play an important role with the training of the army and the police force. So, there will be an American presence, but it will have a lower profile.

We won't have any occupation like 1915. Instead, economic measures will be taken to really integrate Haiti into the world economy. To the extent that we are talking about putting into place a competent and reasonably honest government, one that creates a climate suitable for a kind of modern form of capitalism, there will be improvement over what we have. I'm not sure the vast majority will benefit, but there will be some improvements. We will see an infrastructure built: better roads, better sanitation, probably a better education system, because this form of capitalism will need a more educated work force.

But on the downside you are talking about an economy more closely integrated into the world capitalist system, one that will be more in the grips of consumerism, as we see elsewhere in the Caribbean. Of course this society will not be particularly tolerant towards labor unions. There won't be the same kind of brutal repression to put them out of business; instead they'll create quiescent labor unions beholden to management. It's an interesting high stakes poker game that's starting right now. The Lavalas people are aware of the stakes and they're going to try to take advantage of the openings.

BT: Given the new situation in Haiti, what guidelines do you see for activists here in the U.S.?

MB: My one overriding concern is that people do not drop their concern for Haiti. There's a tendency that once the periods of intense conflict are over, people begin to lose interest. I hope this doesn't happen. We're simply entering a new phase in Haiti, one, in some sense, that may be more difficult for the grassroots organizations there. So now we need more support and solidarity from the organizations here. This means developing direct ties; it means sending delegations there so people can get to know first hand what the situation is like on the ground. It's important for people to develop real friendships with their counterparts there, so that together they can map out new strategies to deal with the new complexities. So I see a great opportunity ahead of us here in the U.S. to build networks that will optimize people's support for the struggle in Haiti. □

WRITE THROUGH THE WALLS

The U.S. government says there are no political prisoners or POWs in this country. Yet the partial list below shows this claim is a complete lie. We urge you to write them and to send literature. These women and men represent the best of the movement. Make their struggle yours. "The Real Dragon" sponsors a continuing book drive to political prisoners and POWs. For more information or to send contributions write: POB 3294, Berkeley, CA 94703-9901.

Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

Alejandrina Torres #92152-024
FCI Danbury
Pembroke Station
Danbury CT 06811

Ricardo Jimenez #88967-024 A-2
Alberto Rodríguez #92150-024 B-3
USP Lewisburg
PO Box 1000
Lewisburg PA 17837

Edwin Cortes #92153-024
USP Terre Haute
Hwy 63 South
PO Box 33
Terre Haute IN 47808

Carlos Alberto Torres #88976-024
FCI Oxford
PO Box 1000
Oxford WI 53952-1000

Alicia Rodríguez #NO7157
PO Box 5007
Dwight IL 60420

Luis Rosa #NO2743
PO Box 711
Menard IL 62259

Oscar López-Rivera #87651-024
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

Elizam Escobar #88969-024
FCI Colorado Unit
PO Box 1500
El Reno OK 73036

Adolfo Matos #88968-024
Lompoc Fedl Penitentiary
3901 Klein Blvd
Lompoc CA 93436

Dylcia Pagán #88971-024
Lucy Rodríguez #88973-024
Carmen Valentín #88974-024
FCI Dublin
5701 8th Street
Camp Parks
Dublin CA 94568

Puerto Rican Political Prisoners

Norman Ramirez Talavera
Roberto Jose Maldonado
Hilton Diamante Fernandez
Orlando Gonzalez-Claudio

Antonio Camacho #03587-069
USP Allenwood
PO Box 3000
White Deer PA 17887

Juan Segarra-Palmer #15357-077
PO Box PMB
Atlanta GA 30315

New Afrikan/Black Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners

Ojore N Lutalo
#CN-861-59860 MCU
Trenton State Prison
Box CN-861
Trenton NJ 08625

Herman Bell #79-C-262
Eastern Corr Facility
PO Box 338
Napanoch NY 12458-0338

Teddy (Jah) Heath #75-A-0139
Jalil A. Muntaqin #77-A-4283
s/n Anthony Bottom
Shawangunk Corr Facility
PO Box 700
Wallkill NY 12589

Adbul Majid #83-A-0483
s/n Anthony LaBorde
Sullivan Corr Facility
Box A-G
Fallsburg NY 12733-0483

Mohaman Koti #80-A-808
Great Meadow Corr Facility
PO Box 51
Comstock NY 12821

Abdul Haqq #89-T-1710
s/n Craig Randall
Maliki Shakur Latine #81-A-4469
Albert Nuh Washington #77-A-1528
PO Box 2001
Dannemora NY 12929-2001

Bashir Hameed #82-A-6313
s/n James York
Robert Seth Hayes #74-A-2280
Wende Corr Facility
1187 Wende Road
Alden NY 14004

Richard Mafundi Lake #79972-X
100 Warrior Lane 4-93B
Bessemer AL 35023

Sekou Kambui #113058
s/n William Turk
PO Box 10 (6B28)
Clio AL 36017

Kojo Bomani Sababu #39384-066
s/n Grailing Brown
USP Lewisburg
PO Box 1000
Lewisburg PA 17837

Sundiata Acoli #39794-066
s/n Clark Squire
Sekou Odinga #05228-054
USP Allenwood
PO Box 3000
White Deer PA 17887

Thomas Warner #M3049
Drawer R
Huntingdon PA 16652

William Allen #66843
RMSI
7475 Cockrell Bend
Ind. Road
Nashville TN 37243-0471

Lorenzo Stone-Bey #10006
Indiana State Prison
Box 41 IDU/1W14
Michigan City IN 46361-0041

Mutulu Shakur #83205-012
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

Mondo Langa
s/n David Rice
PO Box 2500
Lincoln NE 68542-2500

Gary Tyler #84156
Louisiana State Penitentiary
84156 — Ash 4
Angola LA 70712

Rickke Green #84244
OSP
PO Box 97
McAlester OK 74502-0097

Haki Malik Abdullah #C-56123
s/n Michael Green
Corcoran Prison
PO Box 3456
Corcoran CA 93212

Kalima Aswad #B24120
s/n Robert Duren
CMC
PO Box 8108 Cell 1372
San Luis Obispo CA
93409-8108

geronimo ji-Jaga (pratt)
#B40319-C234L
PO Box 409000
Ione CA 94640

Ruchell Cinque Magee #A92051
Pelican Bay CF
PO Box 7500 SHU 2-C-223
Crescent City CA 95531

Hugo Pinell #A88401
Pelican Bay CF
PO Box 7500 SHU D-8-205
Crescent City CA 95531

Mark Cook #027100
PO Box 777
Monroe WA 98272

MOVE Prisoners

Consuelia Dotson Africa
Carlos Perez Africa

Michael Davis Africa #AM-4973
Mumia Abu Jamal #AM-8335
1100 Pike St
Huntingdon PA 16654-1112

William Phillips Africa #AM-4984
RFD 3—Box A
Belleville PA 16823

Edward Goodman Africa #AM-4974
PO Box 200
Camp Hill PA 17001-0200

Delbert Orr Africa #AM-4985
Drawer K
Dallas PA 18612

Charles Sims Africa #AM-4975
PO Box 244
Gratersford PA 19426

Debbi Sims Africa #006307
Janine Phillips Africa #006309
Merle Austin Africa #006306
Janet Holloway Africa #006308
PO Box 180
Muncy PA 17756

Virgin Islands 5

Hanif Shabazz Bey #9654-131
s/n B Gereau
USP Lewisburg
PO Box 1000
Lewisburg PA 17837

Malik El-Amin #96557-131
s/n Meral Smith
USP Terre Haute
Hwy 63 South
PO Box 33
Terre Haute IN 47808

Abdul Aziz #96521-131
s/n Warren Ballentine
USP Leavenworth
PO Box 1000
Leavenworth KS 66048

Raphael Kwesi Joseph #96558-131
Lompoc Fedl Penitentiary
3901 Klein Blvd
Lompoc CA 93436

Native American Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners

George Still Day #173788
Greenville Correctional Ctr
901 Corrections Way
Jarrat VA 23870

Eddie Hatcher #DL213
PO Box 700
Raeford NC 28376

Scott Seelye #02601-041
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

Leonard Peltier #89637-132
USP Leavenworth
PO Box 1000
Leavenworth KS 66048

Standing Deer #640289
aka Robert Hugh Wilson
Ellis 1 Unit
Huntsville TX 77343

Norma Jean Croy #14293
CIW Chowchilla
PO Box 1501
Chowchilla CA 93610

Mexican Political Prisoners

Luis Rodríguez #C 33000
Pelican Bay CF
PO Box 7500 C-12-202
Crescent City CA 95532-7500

Cuban Political Prisoners

Ana Lucia Gelabert #384484
PO Box 6000
Marlin TX 76661-9772

Irish Political Prisoners

Joseph McColgan
Peter Eamonn McGuire
Kevin McKinley
Seamus Moley
Noel O Murchu
Jim Smith

Martin P Quigley #41064-006
FCI Allenwood
Box 2500 Unit 4A Medium
White Deer PA 17887

Richard Johnson #17422-038
FCI Allenwood
Box 2000 Unit 3A
White Deer PA 17887

Kevin Artt #33020-198
FDC Pleasanton
5675 8th St
Dublin CA 94568

Japanese Political Prisoners

Yu Kikumura #09008-050
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

North American Political Prisoners

Richard Picariello #05812
Maine State Prison
Box A
Thomaston ME 04861

Silvia Baraldini #05125-054
FCI Danbury
Pembroke Station
Danbury CT 06811

Kathy Boudin #84-G-171
Judy Clark #83-G-313
Bedford Hills
PO Box 1000
Bedford Hills NY 10507

Timothy Blunk #09429-050
Larry Giddings #10917-086
USP Lewisburg
PO Box 1000
Lewisburg PA 17837

Raymond Levasseur #10376-016
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

Susan Rosenberg #03684-016
Laura Whitehorn #22432-037
FCI Marianna
PMB 7006
Shawnee Unit
Marianna FL 32447

David Gilbert #83-A-6158
Great Meadow Corr Facility
PO Box 51
Comstock NY 12821

Thomas Manning #10373-016
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

Bill Dunne #10916-086 BL-107
Jaan Laaman #10372-016
USP Leavenworth
PO Box 1000
Leavenworth KS 66048

Richard Williams #10377-106
3901 Klein Blvd
Lompoc CA 93436

Marilyn Buck #00482-285
Linda Evans #19973-054
FCI Dublin
5701 8th Street Unit A
Camp Parks
Dublin CA 94568

Paul Wright #930783
PO Box 777
Monroe WA 98272

Plowshares/Disarmament Prisoners

Phil Berrigan
John Dear
Rick Springer

Brain Terrell
c/o Strangers & Guests Catholic
Worker
PO Box 264
Maloy, IA 50852

Fr Frank Cordero
c/o St Patrick's Church
223 Harmony St
Council Bluffs IA 51503

Lynn Frederiksson #14852-056
C-11 FPC Box A
Glen Ray Rd
Alderson WV 24910

Bruce Friedrich #17065-016
Unit Alex
FCI Morgantown
PO Box 1000
Morgantown WV 26507

Fr Carl Kabat, OMI #10888
North Dakota State Penitentiary
PO Box 5521
Bismarck ND 58502

Mark Davis #23106-008
FPC Mailbox 064
PO Box 1000
Boron, CA 93516



International Human Rights Day DECEMBER 10TH

Be There.

The National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners is organizing and co-sponsoring activities in 25 cities and 10 countries throughout the world on December 10, 1994, in support of the campaign for amnesty.

We hope to increase public pressure on the Clinton administration on December 10, when, in addition to the sponsorship of nationwide activities, we will publish an open letter in the New York Times, urging the President to concede unconditional amnesty.

Please take a minute to send a check or money order in support of this effort. The New York Times ad alone will cost \$17,000. Contact us for more information on how to get involved.

Remember, any amount you contribute, no matter how small it may seem, is part of a larger effort—an effort that can make a difference for the prisoners in the near future.

National Committee to Free POWs and Political Prisoners
(312) 278-0885, fax: (312) 342-6609
1112 N. California Avenue
Chicago, IL 60622

I had a Venus Fly Trap in my home in El Salvador. In my yard we had a fruit tree with many plums. My house was made of adobe. We had calendars on the wall. One had a picture of a wolf and the other was a picture of a kid sitting on a hammock. I remember a painting of horses. I was five years old when my mother left for the United States.

When I was nine years old my mother telephoned my aunt and cousin and said that I should come to the United States.

I came from El Salvador to Los Angeles on a bus. The coyote was waiting for me in Los Angeles. She gave me food and a place to stay for three days. She wanted to pass us in the morning.

I remember a dark and cracking street with puddles. At the end of the street I saw police hiding behind trees on bicycles. I saw them start to approach us and I was the first to run. They caught everyone else but me. I hid behind a tree by the river and then, all of a sudden, I fell asleep. When I woke up the coyote was standing over me.

We had to cross the river. There were four other men trying to cross over. We took tires to help us float across. The eddies in the river spun us around. The four men fell off their tires into the water. The tires came back but we never saw the men again.

After we crossed the river we hid behind trees. Then we ran to a nearby house and waited there for five days. We didn't have much to eat.

Then two pick-up trucks came to the house and we all lay down in the back. I was on top of someone else. I was the only kid. The coyote dropped us off in the desert. We walked for four days. We found some water but it was too sour to drink. On our way we saw several animals with just one eye. I remember passing by a house made of pure sand - it was made only of sand. The man walking in the front used his knife in the sand to search for motion detectors. I looked up on the hills and saw men watching us through binoculars.

We ran through a railroad tunnel and had to hide behind rocks until night. We had to be very quiet so they wouldn't find us. While we waited I accidentally made a small noise when my shoe touched a click and I had to run. We climbed over rocks to get to the top of the hill. It was night and people were slipping and falling. Finally, everyone found their own rock and fell asleep. Every night I would sleep curled up in a ball. I didn't have a blanket.

We started off early the next morning. Everyone was really thirsty. I remember seeing a big sandy hill with a lot of deer on it. When we passed through the desert a car was waiting for us. So finally arrived in L.A. and got to eat and sleep in a house for three days. Each day they selected people to leave. I was the last one. I was taken to another house. I opened the door and my mother was standing there inside.

I want to be a lawyer.
I would like to have a dog.
I would like to see my sister again.
She is still in El Salvador.

Fourth Grader
Babil Vista Elementary School

"Have You Seen Me?" was created by Larry and Kelly Sultan with students from Babil Vista Elementary School and San Rafael High School.

"Have You Seen Me?" is sponsored by Public Art Works, a non-profit arts agency, with generous support from United Markets.

PUBLIC ART WORKS

Have You Seen Me?